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# THE

# PRINCETON

# SEMINARY

# BULLETIN

A Call for Authority in the Christian Community	Peter L. Berger
The Campus Ministry and the Crisis in Authority	Marvin P. Hoogland
A Christian Perspective on South Africa	Alan C. Paton
Easter and Political Theology	Robert Kress
The Nature of Human Nature	W. Norman Pittenger
The Synthesizing Potential of Religion	Edward J. Jurji
The Gospel	Earl F. Palmer
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Sermons	Occasional Papers
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## THE PRINCETON SEMINARY BULLETIN

DONALD MACLEOD, *Editor*

EDWARD J. JURJ, *Book Review Editor*

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# Excerpta et Commentaria

by the EDITOR

## *The Princeton Men*

AN editor's desk is frequently the *terminus ad quem* for a wide assortment of pamphlets, brochures, flyers, and circulars from both identifiable and anonymous traders and donors. Recently a slim magazine arrived from The Banner of Truth Trust, London, England, which bore a cover picture of J. Gresham Machen and inside an editorial entitled, "The Princeton Men." In the course of seven pages, Paul Helm (who is not identified) discusses intelligently and fairly a school across the Atlantic which he describes as "one of the most remarkable institutions of modern times" where "under the guidance of its gifted teachers and the publications of its professors . . . the voice of Princeton echoed around the world, and still does."

Helm is aware of the peril of handling traditions and, therefore, he asks, "What are we praising when we extol the 'Princeton tradition'?" He answers his own question: "It was a manner of Christian living and speaking calculated to let the voice of Christ in Scripture speak with maximum force to his Church." Then he singles out three elements that especially mark this tradition:

1. *It was a confessional tradition.* This means that the Princeton men were committed to the classic traditions of the Reformed churches; they were, he said, "doctrinal maximalists." "To say the tradition was confessional is to say that it was theological, involving a view of life founded on the decree of God, and his covenant purpose to justify, sanctify, and glorify sinners by Jesus Christ." He quotes A. A. Hodge as saying that the main characteristic of Princeton theology was "close and persistent adherence to the type of Calvinism taught in the Westminster standards as these are interpreted in the light of the classical literature of the Swiss, Dutch and English Puritan theologians." Helm then points out that "Princeton scholars were not just able technicians; they served, in their work, the knowledge of God." Indeed, Dr. Machen at a later date allowed that although his was a lifetime of New Testament study, yet he regarded this "as ancillary to systematic theology."

2. *It was a scholarly tradition.* If the Princeton tradition were to maintain its confessional character, then it must be communicated "as fully and clearly as possible." This demanded, as Helm states, "a knowledge of the original languages of Scripture and of the history of the Church and of Christian doctrine." This, he said, was vital. Writing of the minister's preparation for his work, Warfield said, "He must know the languages in which the gospel is written; and he must be skilled in drawing out from the documents the exact meaning. And then he must know the message thoroughly and in all its compass and details, in its right per-



spective, and in its just proportions. Otherwise he cannot use it aright. Of course, he must also be skilled in presenting this message winningly and in applying it helpfully, point by point, to emerging needs. . . . Without this much equipment, the evangelical minister is robbed of his dignity and shorn of his strength."

3. *This tradition had a concern for personal religion and preaching.* The piety of the Princeton men, Helm says, was not "the showy, talkative thing it has so largely become in modern evangelicalism. Their learning and devotion to Scripture, their fairness and courtesy in controversy, were just as much expressions of their commitment to Christ as were acts of public and private religious devotion." To illustrate this frame of mind he quotes from Warfield's address on the religious life of theological students: "You are here as theological students; and if you would be religious men, you must do your duty for your religious life in your theological studies; you must enter fully into the organic religious life of the community of which you form a part. But to do all this, you must keep the fires of religious life burning brightly in your heart; in the inmost core of your being, you must be men of God."

The Princeton men were committed to preaching. Not only were they enablers in the development of young ministers as preachers of the gospel but, to quote Helm, "the professors in the Seminary evidently regarded themselves as the ministers of Christ as well. They preached frequently and published volumes of sermons." They would scorn a recent benighted remark that "professors who preach on Sunday are breaking the Sabbath." In support of this unique preacher-scholar characteristic of the Princeton men, Helm quotes from Warfield's tribute to his colleague, George T. Purves: "It is idle to ask whether Dr. Purves was more the preacher or more the scholar. The two things cannot be separated in his case. He was never more the profoundly instructed scholar than when he stood in the pulpit; he was never more the preacher of righteousness than when he sat in the classroom. He certainly was not a scholastic preacher; and certainly was not what is called a 'homiletical' teacher. He was too ripe a scholar to take the atmosphere of the study into the pulpit with him; he was too skilled in the art of religious impression to carry the pulpit tone into the classroom. On the other hand, the whole man, with all his gifts and graces, was present wherever he went; and as he was one of the most reverential of teachers, so was he habitually one of the most theological of preachers."

These were the marks, Helm concludes, of the Princeton tradition. And although no one can actually re-live it identically today, yet Helm finds several lessons in it that are worth recognizing and implementing. In an age when the nature of theological education and training for the Christian ministry is under rigorous debate, the Princeton tradition attests that although methods may need continual changing, yet the objectives of ministerial education are never negotiable. The second lesson Helm finds in the Princeton tradition is suggested by the rash of "opposites" in contemporary churches—"preaching versus teaching, faith versus reason, believing versus doing, theory versus practice"—all of which indicates a decline in "the unity of Christian life and experience." This has given the church today "a split personality: for many, Christianity is a matter of making the right



emotional responses and being ceaselessly active, while for many others it is a matter of arid, compassionless polemics."

The Princeton men, he observes, were able to live whole lives because of "consecration to God's truth." This phrase, Helm realizes, suggests for some people only the "evangelistic big-tent," but for others it means "thorough, thoughtful, resolute consecration of the whole man to Christ's truth and to his cause." Moreover, he feels this to be "a necessary ingredient in that revived church life and Christian culture for which we long."

### *Taking Stock of the Ministry*

For some years the Office of Vocation of the United Presbyterian Church, USA, under the leadership of William H. Henderson, has been examining the statistical ebb and flow of the professional leadership of the denomination. With the needs of the present in mind and questions regarding the future pressing, certain statistical tabulations are of interest and significance. These are grouped under the following twelve main headings:

1. During the period 1961-1971, the net gain of ordained ministers was 1182, while a decrease of 523 occurred in the number of churches through mergers, amalgamations and re-locations. However, in the year 1970 alone, there was a net decrease of 76,959 in communicant members.

2. Four factors figure in the appropriation of professional personnel in the church:

- (i) Salaries: personnel are not in demand because salaries are either inadequate or unavailable.

- (ii) The number of vacant pulpits recorded in the General Assembly Minutes is not a reliable guide because the salaries possible in some instances cannot support a full-time ordained minister.

- (iii) On account of the significant drop in overall membership in the denomination, the former ratio of the number of communicant members to active ordained ministers no longer holds.

- (iv) Many potential projects needing professional leadership and seed-money from the denomination itself have had either to be postponed or abandoned altogether because of the decrease in the benevolence givings of the church membership. This decrease was 5.25 per cent in 1969, but against the background of inflation it means eleven percent.

3. Despite popular rumor, there has been no exaggerated exodus of ordained Presbyterian ministers from service in the church. During 1970 out of 13,000 ministers on the rolls of the presbyteries only 84 have been dropped.

4. In the last few years there has been an increase in "specialized ministries" outside the borders of the traditional congregational structure, but the new decade has seen a leveling off and in 1970 fewer ministers than before were involved.

5. Specialization, however, is becoming a more active factor in the local church. The phenomenon of the multiple staff with increased division of responsibility is becoming common in the larger churches. Hence the number of men serving as associate and assistant ministers has increased noticeably in the past two decades.

6. The number of candidates studying for the Presbyterian ministry has increased since 1967. During the previous decade there was a slight falling off which was due to several factors: (i) young people tend to make vocational decisions later now than prior to the 1950's; (ii) presbyteries are taking greater interest in potential candidates even before formal registration or acceptance; (iii) the drop out of candidates has decreased considerably.

7. The United Presbyterian Church traditionally receives more ministers by transfer from, than it dismisses to, other denominations. In 1970 ninety ministers were received and thirty-eight were transferred.

8. Hitherto most seminary students came from church-related colleges; today, however, the majority comes from state schools, especially where a campus ministry was active. Moreover, ministerial candidates are attending a wider range of seminaries than those identified as being definitely "Presbyterian." In 1970, Presbyterian candidates were scattered among fifty-five seminaries. True, 70.1 per cent were enrolled in official schools of the denomination, but 6.82 per cent were at Yale and Union and the remaining 22.1 per cent were registered at forty-six other institutions.

9. The increase in the number of women among candidates for the ministry is striking. In 1970 there were 103 ordained ministers who were women, but presently there are 213 women registered for church vocations, 72 of these are candidates for the gospel ministry.

10. There is still a shortage of ordained ministers who are black. However, programs are under way for the interpretation of the church and church vocations to black young people and to other minority groups. As a result during the 1970-71 academic year, 44 black United Presbyterian students and 51 other black students were enrolled in the church's seven seminaries.

11. An increase in instruction in undergraduate courses in religion has occurred in colleges and universities. This has been accompanied by exchanges of faculty and students among seminaries and between seminaries and universities.

12. The United Presbyterian Church, as well as other denominations, senses a degree of unrest among its clergy and a dissatisfaction with traditional methods of placement and with the machinery of the "call" system. In the first eight months of 1970, the Department of Ministerial Relations reported 142 names were added to their active file; in 1971, in the same period, the number was 258.

What general observations does Mr. Henderson make in view of the above findings?

(i) In spite of inevitable polarities and statistical recessions, "there is new life in many of our churches." Most congregations seem able to accommodate the traditional and the contemporary; youth participation, even on the Assembly level, is having an enlivening and salutary effect upon the church.

(ii) A change of attitude on the part of students is reported from all the church's seminaries. Anti-institution and anti-establishment hostilities are waning and a serious interest in rejuvenating the parish has begun to appear. The tension between conservatism and activism has eased in the direction of greater balance. No student is happy about the church as it is, but none is negative regarding hope for its future.

*Ministry to Youth*

Christian educators on the parish level are deeply concerned over the crisis in youth work. Professor Sara Little, of the faculty of the Presbyterian School of Christian Education, Richmond, Virginia, feels that this crisis exists "at a deeper level than we had at first imagined. It exists at a cultural level, but also at what might be called the 'life style level.'" Leaders are today either looking back nostalgically to the good old days of Christian Endeavor and the like or seeking for some sharp method or technique that guarantees success with young people. Generally when a method "aces out" in one place, it catches on madly everywhere; but frequently the overall result is disappointment because the *kairos* of success in one location does not guarantee the same in every place.

Some interesting studies, Professor Little indicates, have provided certain findings and conclusions that help to shape our approach and influence our perspective. Gordon Sabine, of the American College Testing Program, canvassed 1,603 eighteen-year-olds and concluded soberly that "our youth are hurting." Morton Strommen, of Youth Research Center, edited a huge volume, *Research on Religious Development*, and reached a similar conclusion and spelled it out as "widespread alienation in the youth experience, inability to delay gratification, and to disenchantment with the church." Peter Marin, in a book called *High School*, remarked that adults "do the best they can, trying increasingly eccentric fashions to make sense of things. But we adults seem to have withdrawn in defeat from that same struggle, to have given up. . . ."

True, many adults have given up, especially on account of the magnitude and manifold character of the sociological forces arrayed against them, but no one can dismiss the fact that regardless of what adult attitudes are—positive or negative—they still have "a shaping influence on youth." For this reason Professor Robert Havighurst of Chicago laments that "the education of middle-class children in recent years has been too strong on analysis, too weak on affirmation." Professor Little adds that recent exploration and research in parent-youth relations have shown that parents, who express Christian commitment with openness, i.e., perceptive in their understanding of their children, have influenced significantly their development in matters of faith and life's meaning. Dr. Havighurst calls for "adult models who demonstrate both self-esteem and social fidelity." This, Dr. Little comments, is to be closely identified with the "life style" needed in youth ministries.

But what do we mean by "life style"? What is equally a problem, how do we "affirm" these continuing disclosures of reality in an era marked by a sense of the impermanence of everything? And who is able to sort out these cultures and subcultures among and to which appeal must be made? Professor Little feels that there are "models of hope" where "something is happening" and that these do make a difference.

To be more specific, she gives concrete suggestions as possible strategies: (i) the participation of adults of integrity who are prepared and willing to become involved with youth in purposes and goals that are "real and demanding"; (ii) the delineation of short-term experiences that have a clear-cut focus and terminus and

are part of a mutually shared process rather than a "diagnostic and prescriptive" operation handled from the top (from adults) down (to youth); (iii) the development within any program of the advantage of peer groups and their potential for mutual helpfulness; and (iv) the attempt to relate youth's two major concerns: questions about God and ultimate destiny and the need for social outreach into a world seemingly gone wrong.

"Somewhere," Professor Little concludes, "in this interactive process of developing identity and commitment there must be the beginning of answers to the hurts characterizing youth today—answers that, as I see it, begin with the life style of adults who care and who affirm the meaning—even the fragments of meaning—they see." (Excerpted from "About Youth Ministry," in *Contemporary Comment*, published by Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia).

### *Students and Prayer*

The November, 1971, issue of the "New Jersey Lutheran" carried a guest editorial on "students and prayer" by the Reverend Warren Strickler, of the Lutheran Campus Ministry at Rutgers University. Some of his remarks are of more than passing interest. He begins by cancelling out such misleading phrases as "the student mind" and "student prayer." There are, he says, "only persons who pray." What is more, people are praying today, whether they want to or not. He quotes the Russian lad in Moscow who asked his parents, "Does God know we don't believe in him?"

The exciting thing about campus praying is that "new forms of prayer are being tried." Much of this is not new; most people have simply had a rather narrow view of the meaning and methods of prayer. People either stand or sit or kneel and focus their thoughts (or intellect) upon "a being—somewhere." But persons are more than intellects. And intellects "are always influenced by hidden thoughts and feelings." Some by fasting go beyond intellect; others suspend the intellect in order to pry behind it or delve beneath it. "Jesus," Strickler says, "seems to have prayed in all sorts of ways—in the breaking of bread, in agonizing decision-wrestling, in a scream from a cross—as well as in words of forgiveness and healing and peace." Our concern, then, should not be directed to the strange and diverse forms of prayer among the "now generation." "What is frightening," says Strickler, "is the exclusion from our churches of almost all forms of prayer—all but a formal intellectual few: the spoken kind."

### *Sermons in Print*

Recently a publisher said to a young and rising preacher, "Give us a manuscript for publication, but don't include any of your Sunday sermons." This remark is an index of the state of the contemporary market for books of sermons. It does not mean that effective sermons are not being preached, published, and read. It does indicate, however, that some publishing houses have not found such books to be profitable ventures financially. Almost no volumes of sermons have been found in recent years among the religious book listings of Harper & Row, Scrib-



ner's, Macmillan, Oxford, Lippincott or Doubleday. Yet such books are being bought, because Baker, Eerdmann, Fortress, Judson, and Word Inc. are turning out some of the best collections of sermons ever (e.g., sermons by David H. C. Read, Ronald Sleeth, W. D. Davies, David MacLennan, to name merely a few).

Perhaps one of the most ambitious projects in the field of sermonic literature is the recently published thirteen-volume encyclopedia by Word Books, Inc., a compilation by William M. Pinson, Jr., and Clyde E. Fant, Jr., of Southwestern Baptist Seminary, entitled *Twenty Centuries of Great Preaching*, of sermons by Christian preachers from the time of Jesus to the present day. Heralded by teachers of preachers throughout America as a landmark in sermonic publishing, this massive work will continue to be a fruitful anthology for research and a handy reference library for teachers of homiletical craftsmanship.

A less ambitious project, yet an exceedingly valuable contribution to the history of preaching, is *Sermons in American History*, edited by DeWitte Holland (Abingdon Press, 1971). This volume is more than an average anthology; it singles out a series of national, civil, and religious concerns from the story of America and after a competent analysis of each issue, several sermons representative of varying positions are included. Students of the place of religion, particularly of the pulpit, in American life will find in this volume excellent source material and a balanced interpretation of the interaction of preaching and the major issues of three hundred years of our history.

From Britain comes a series of paperbacks entitled generally "Sermons for Today" (Epworth, 1969, and onwards). These have reached number eight in the series and provide an interesting cross-section of conservative, *avant-garde*, and life-situation approaches to preaching. All of the preachers are British—among them, J. H. Withers, Erik Routley, John Banks, and Maldwyn Edwards—with Donald Macleod as the only American.

It is an unusual season that does not feature a volume of sermons by David A. MacLennan, minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Pompano Beach, Florida. Throughout a lifetime of preaching and teaching, Dr. MacLennan works hard and joyously over his sermons and the consistently large congregations which come to hear him are proof of his effectiveness (an aggregate of five thousand worshippers at the Easter services in 1971). A series of sermons for the festivals of the Christian Year, *Sermons of Faith and Hope*, appeared early in 1971 (Judson Press) and very recently, *Preaching Values in Today's English Version* (Abingdon, 1972), an original and creative handling of fresh facets of scriptural thought suggested by the new translation, *Good News for Modern Man*—the best selling paperback of all times.

One of the best sermon paperbacks from abroad is *More Sermons from Great St. Mary's* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1971), edited by Hugh Montefiore and consisting of his selections from pulpit presentations during the final three years of his ministry at the University Church. These sermons bear such distinguished names as Donald Coggan, J.A.T. Robinson, C. Day Lewis, C.F.D. Moule, and others. These pages make for us "compulsive reading" just as Dr. Montefiore found in them "compulsive listening." Probably the most useful chapter is "What is the Resur-

rection?", an unrehearsed dialogue between Bishop Montefiore and Bishop Robinson. If dialogue sermons could match this quality generally, no stronger argument would be needed for their viability.

In a similar vein of university preaching, W. D. Davies, of the Department of New Testament Studies at Duke University Divinity School, has given us *The New Creation* (Fortress, 1971), twelve sermons originally delivered during daily services in college chapels. These are an attempt to present through preaching "the heart of the Bible." Professor Davies comes through as a preacher and scholar of undoubted competence. Moreover, his understanding of the Good News that makes all things new will excite even a journeyman preacher to interpret afresh the things with which "we have to do."

Another book, *Seeing Ourselves in the Bible* (Arthur James, 1971), has come from the pen of John Bishop, a British Methodist, who has been a teacher and pastor in America for several decades. An effective preacher in the more traditional style, Dr. Bishop reads widely and writes faultless prose. In these fourteen sermons, as Kenneth Waight says in the Foreword, "Dr. Bishop has brought his gift of insight into God's work as it is revealed in Scripture, his deep understanding of human nature, and the breadth and depth of his reading" (p. 5).

### *The Re-Birth of Spirituals*

After the Supreme Court decision in 1954, many songs which marked the legacy of Stephen Foster went into eclipse. A certain impropriety, somewhat justifiable, haunted us whenever at some song-fest someone led us in the lonesome strains of "Swanee River" or "Old Black Joe." Unfortunately this quarantine embraced also many of the Negro spirituals and consequently a general impoverishment has been felt by White and Black races alike. Happily in recent years, however, the Negro spiritual has enjoyed a renaissance. This can be traced largely to the influence and leadership of Edward Boatner of New York, an enthusiastic exponent of the spiritual as a part of personal religious experience. From a thorough study of these songs he has found in them the religious expressions of the illiterate field slaves in the southern States centuries ago. This induced Boatner—a graduate of the Chicago College of Music—to organize a choir to strengthen this revival and particularly to present his own production entitled, "The Life of Christ," an interpretation of Jesus' thirty-three years on earth through drama, poetry, dance, and his own arrangements of twenty-five Negro spirituals.

The choral presentation begins by emphasizing the Incarnation and with the choir singing the spiritual, "Create Me a Body and I'll Go Down." Then follows "Baby Bethlehem" portraying Jesus' birth and "Little Boy, How Old Are You?" illustrating his growing up. His baptism by John the Baptist is accompanied by "Wade in the Water." During the Last Supper, the choir sings the moving spiritual, "Let Us Break Bread Together" and following the Crucifixion, the chorus, "He Arose." Boatner's aim is evangelistic also. To a *New York Times* reporter, Thomas A. Johnson, he said, "I'm hoping that the work will do much to persuade thousands who have drifted away from the church and Christianity to come back."

The popularity of the Negro spiritual has waxed and waned, yet its leading interpreters through the years have agreed that the recognition by the Black people in America of the value and beauty of this heritage has produced a new and healthy phase of race consciousness. Prior to 1871 the spiritual was enclosed in something of an ethnic preserve. Nat Turner in Virginia in 1831 used the beautiful "Steal Away" to open the meetings in which he planned his slave revolt. John Lowell, Jr., in *The Social Implications of the Negro Spiritual*, wrote: "The spiritual, then, is the key to the slave's description and criticism of his environment. It is the key to his revolutionary sentiments and to his desire to fly to free territory."

The spiritual rose to new stature in America generally after 1871 when the Fisk Jubilee Singers—four Black boys and five girls—toured the United States, Europe, and England (they sang before Queen Victoria) and brought back \$150,000 to found Fisk University. However, there followed a decline of interest in spirituals among the Blacks themselves after slavery. This was accounted for by the zeal of the Black race to blot out every element of slavery, but as Jo Jackson—co-author of "The Believers," a recent musicale incorporating spirituals—has said, "They threw out the good in the spirituals with the bad." In the past decade, a reawakening of the spiritual has accompanied the civil rights movement and through the inspiration of both the familiar and some long-forgotten songs of the Black race the interest and enthusiasm of rallies and mass meetings have been sustained.

### *Winnowing or Decline—Which?*

A year-end report from Princeton's Gallup Poll indicates that "churchgoing in the United States in 1971 continued a thirteen-year downward trend with only forty per cent of adults of all faiths in attendance at worship in a typical week." This was two per cent lower than 1970 and nine since 1958, the peak year in attendance. The decline was most precipitous in the Roman Catholic Church, a shrinkage from seventy-one per cent in 1964 to fifty-seven in 1971. Curiously enough, attendance among Protestants and Jews has remained steady throughout the corresponding period, although their percentages do not give reason for any complacency.

In the broader spectrum of the religious life of the North American continent, probably the strangest phenomenon is the decline of the Roman Catholic Church in the Province of Quebec in Canada. Once the bastion of old world catholicism in the new, a recent report declares, "The Roman Catholic Church in Quebec today is in a state of crisis." In a brief to the Catholic bishops of Canada, an eleven-member commission, appointed in 1968 to make recommendations on the laity and the church, has spelled out this doleful commentary: "Religious practice is in decline, the clergy are unable to find new recruits to their ranks, the young are turned off by religion, and the Christian community has lost its sense of purpose."

The commission, headed by Fernand Dumont, one of Quebec's leading sociologists, and with Claude Ryan, editor of *Le Devoir*, Montreal's influential French



newspaper, as vice-chairman, conducted hearings across the province and discovered how to an alarming degree the church was no longer an element in the fabric of society. This condition was underscored by statistical facts. In 1946, about 2,000 men had begun studies for the priesthood; by 1970, the number of new recruits was less than one hundred. Catholic Action groups, with 28,000 members in 1961, were down to 3,000 a decade later, and most of them made up of women and children. Church attendance has declined as the average Frenchman becomes educated and a new "elitism" among those under thirty and in the urban areas has hurried the end of religion as an organic element in society. "The bursting of values," the report states, "of ideologies, of systems, of cultures, and even of the sciences, produces a multiplicity of fragmented and more or less deformed images like those reflected by a broken mirror."

Although diminishing figures and influence are reasons for anxiety, the commission's deepest distress was created by the seeming indifference of each community to the growing evidence of a serious crisis taking shape within the church. At the same time, however, other phenomena either relieved or aggravated the shock, depending how one looks at the situation. These include the increasing growth in numbers of informal organizations outside the church and its hierarchy where adults meet frequently to discuss theology, initiate social action, and sponsor informal and leisurely get-togethers. In view of this new order of things, the commission made a series of recommendations, some of which were: (i) It is the duty of lay people to assume greater initiative and not to expect everything in religious matters to be done by the clergy. (ii) Each parish should have its own council on which lay persons should serve and decide upon the church and the community's needs. (iii) A lay apostolate should undertake a deeper commitment to evangelize daily life. (iv) The bishops should invite lay participation at all levels of decision-making regarding issues that involve the church and affect the community as a whole.

Doubtless the commission considers these recommendations to be a step forward and hopes their acceptance will be evidence that a change of polity may mean a change of principle. But, just as the Church owes its rise neither from nor through polity, so should its renewal not be expected by changing the positions of the average player in the field. In *Structures for Renewal*, Bishop Vaughan brings the central issue home to us when he writes:

"We are now in a situation where we are forced to grasp at every opportunity which may offer new life to the church. We must discover by experiment what the church is called to do in this new era. We need the radical mind which is ready to take risks. We need to be with the world. But in all this we must not lose our theological bearings. We must continually ask why we are sent. We must ask what is the purpose of it all. And what *is* the purpose of it all? Do we do all these things simply in order to keep the church going, to retain the significance of the church and ourselves in the social order? Surely not. Is it not to help the world become what it was meant to be? Radicalism that springs only out of fear of insignificance is not rooted in God's concern for the world. We

may have to demonstrate our communion with Christ's love for the world by plumbing the depths of insignificance, by becoming more hidden with him, by giving up our frantic struggles to live, so that there, hidden and incognito, the church may with Christ work the salvation of those it has been sent to serve—and wait till God raises it to Easter glory out of the glory of love and service."

D.M.

# A Call for Authority in the Christian Community

by PETER L. BERGER

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THERE seems to be a sense of waiting in the American churches today. Everywhere one encounters the question "What next?", sometimes asked in puzzlement, sometimes with deep apprehension. The question refers to a number of different levels. On the broadest level, of course, it is the question that every thoughtful person must ask himself about American society today. I doubt whether Christians have any greater wisdom on this that is not to be found elsewhere. Christians share with others in America the same moral anguish, are haunted by the same apocalyptic visions, struggle to glimpse signs of hope in the murky mess of our public life. But the question "What next?" also refers to specifically Christian concerns. On the level of theological thought, there also seems to be a pause. Nothing much is happening right now, one is told by observers of the theological scene; the theological excitements of yesteryear seem to have petered out, and no one has a very strong idea as to where the next focus of lively debate

will be. On a deeper level the question "What next?" is one of faith—more accurately perhaps, of the quest for faith. It is the question of those who have struggled long with tribulations and with doubt, who are rather exhausted by it all, and who yet wait for the morning when their stubborn hunches will be gloriously changed into certainties. On that last level the question is an ancient one indeed, reaching us over the centuries as one is calling us from Se'ir—"Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?"

I cannot give confident answers on any of these levels. I'm neither a political nor a theological prophet, and certainly not one of those watchmen God sends on occasion to tell us, in his name what time it is in our night of waiting. I too must be a questioner, not an answer-giver. What I will try to do here, however, is to comment on the situation from which this question comes, and (albeit with considerable trepidation) to suggest a new stance

that, I think, is called for as Christians seek some answers.

Inevitably such comment will have a personal quality. In other words, I cannot play the part of the social scientist making detached and dispassionate statements about the situation. Or perhaps I should say that I *could* play this part very comfortably—but that I have the sneaking suspicion this is not what I have been invited for on this occasion.

I may be allowed then to begin with a personal reference. It is now almost exactly ten years ago that my book, *The Noise of Solemn Assemblies*, was published. At the time it made a considerable amount of noise of its own and it still happens to me in some Protestant circles that I meet people who identify me as its author in ego-sapping ignorance of my more recent literary productions. I don't think this book was terribly important in itself; it was part of a broad wave of sharp criticism from within that went through mainline Protestantism in the late 1950's and early 1960's. But (for reasons that, I'm sure, have something to do with original sin) one's own books serve as landmarks as one tries to figure out a portion of lived-through history. Therefore, in thinking of what to say on this occasion, I thought of this particular book and quite naturally found myself asking, "What has happened since then?" and further, "Is there some continuity between what I felt I had to say then and what I would say now?"

What *has* happened since then? I think most people, if they think back to 1961, will agree that the Christian community in America was in a vastly different situation then from the one it is in today. The decade that has elapsed since then has been one of deepening

crisis both for American society and for the American churches. Ten years ago both seemed to have about them a quality of *intactness*, which some of us today may find difficult to recapture emotionally. Then, the critic appeared to be banging against the locked gates of majestically self-confident institutional edifices. Today, he is more like a man storming through doors torn wide-open by an earthquake. The ground on which we are standing has been profoundly shaken, and most of us feel it even in our bones.

Different things have to be said at different times. At one time it may be necessary to remind Israel of God's judgment, at another time to speak tenderly to Jerusalem and to comfort God's people. Also, different things may have to be said in different places. This is a very big country. What has been heard *ad nauseam* in one place may still be the latest news in another. Nevertheless, as I was following the line of thought just mentioned I came to a conclusion that I find both surprising and somehow comforting—namely, *that, in essence, the same thing must be said today that I felt necessary to say then.*

The conclusion surprised me for two reasons. The first, and less interesting reason is that my own theological views have changed considerably since 1961, so that, for example, I can no longer use the stern, quasi-Barthian language with which I still felt comfortable at that time. But the more important reason for my surprise is the vastly changed situation of which I just spoke. Can it make sense to deliver, in essence, the same message to a house full of noisy celebration and to a house in which everyone is sitting under the table, wait-



ing for the next rock to come flying in? I will suggest to you that, indeed, it does make sense. What is more, I will suggest that the same essential message that was once heard as an attack can at a later date be heard as comfort.

Ten years ago, and certainly all through the 1950's, there was, to be sure, a certain *malaise* in American Protestantism. It is probably safe to say, though, that it was limited to relatively small circles within the churches. Even there, in retrospect, it was a pretty mild affair, compared with the orgies of self-doubt and self-denigration that were to follow. The overall picture that confronted the critical observer was that of a secure, well-established and generally self-satisfied "culture Protestantism." It was in this situation that a number of people, myself included, felt it necessary to protest that there was something very wrong with such an "establishment"—*not* because American culture or American society were peculiarly rotten (I did not believe this then and I do not believe it now), but because the Christian community must not identify itself fully with *any* socio-cultural context. There are, to be sure, different views of the manner in which Christianity should relate to the historical situations in which it is embodied as a community. But it seems to me there is always a need for sharp warnings when this relationship takes the form of comfortable, unproblematic identification. At such times, I think, it is necessary to recall that Christianity always stands over and beyond any particular culture, and that this transcendence involves judgment as well as grace.

The situation could not be more different today. Mainline Protestantism is marked by a widespread demoraliza-

tion that (quite properly, I think) has been called a general failure of nerve. Its expressions range from masochistic self-laceration to hysterical defensiveness, but hardly anyone has remained untouched by it. If it has been suggested rather nastily that the institutional efforts to cope with the crisis are like rearranging the deck chairs on the *Titanic*, then it may be added that some of the critics of the institution have in effect been saying that we should blow up the ship before it even gets to the iceberg. Also, we are in good company now. The Catholics, who back in 1961 still seemed to be sitting pretty on their Rock of Peter, are now looking for plausible lifeboats with the rest of us. Panic seems to have crept up even on Southern Baptists and Missouri Lutherans. As to the rest of society, a convincing case could be made that, compared with some other institutions (the university, for example), the church is really not in such bad shape.

Christians, like other men, are creatures of habit. A man whose hat has been blown away by the wind will look for another hat to put in its place. A "culture Protestantism" whose culture has, or seems to have, been blown away promptly starts looking for a replacement. I think that many in our churches today can be described as being *in search of a culture with which to identify*. The liaison with American culture has gone sour, for whatever reasons. The solution seems to be the search for another culture with which a more satisfactory arrangement could be undertaken. I hope you will not think me facetious if, in this connection, I cite a passage by Johann Nestroy, the 19th-century Austrian comic playwright. It goes something like this:

"There are some men who are shattered when their mistress leaves them. These are little souls. Then there are others, bigger souls, who quickly compensate for their loss by finding a replacement. The really great souls have the replacement ready before the loss has occurred." In this sense, it seems, that we have no shortage of great souls.

There is today an anxious search for cultures other than that of so-called Middle America, for new cultural partners with which to enter into some form of Christian union. The list is long—the youth culture, the counter-culture, black culture, various romanticized versions of Third World cultures, and, last but not least, the vision of a future culture that is expected to ensue from this or that revolutionary liberation. Theologians seem to be vying with each other to produce the formulas that will render these unions legitimate. It is all the more important to perceive the fundamental continuity between the earlier "culture Protestantism" and what is going on now. For once this continuity has been perceived, it suddenly becomes clear why the same essential message must be addressed today to the new "culture Protestants" *in spe*. Once more, I think, it is necessary to affirm the transcendence and the authority of Christianity over and beyond any cultural constellation in history, present or future, "established" or still striving for "establishment." It is necessary to do this now as it was then—this time *not* because American culture is peculiarly good, but because every conceivable alternative to it is itself transcended and judged in the Christian perspective.

To those who revel in the first love of this or that newly found socio-cul-

tural identification, this affirmation will appear as an attack. In this they are no different from those who, ten years ago, did not wish to be disturbed in their then-happy marriage with American culture. But there are others—Nestroy's little souls, perhaps, or could it be the poor in spirit?—those who feel bereft of old securities and yet cannot console themselves with new ones. Correction: I will not speak of these in the third person, because I count myself as one of them. For those of us, then, who are at sea and who are unsure of our home in history, the affirmation of Christian transcendence comes as a word of great comfort. It tells us to be calm, to stop our frantic search for cultural and ideological refuges. It tells us that there is no abiding refuge in this world—except one—but this one we do not have to search for, because it has been here all the time.

## I

If there is any stance that has marked the Christian community in recent years, it is that of *listening*. In one sense, of course, Christians ought always to be listening. If we are commanded to love others, we must listen to them. But the stance that concerns me here has involved listening of a very specific kind—namely, listening for the redemptive word, on the part of those who feel they don't have it. More specifically, it has involved listening to an entity known as "modern man," in the expectation that thence will come the redemptive word.

There is, of course, a considerable history behind this stance. And, I hasten to add, there are aspects of this history that I value very positively. The idea that Christian thought ought to engage

in an attentive dialogue with intellectual and cultural currents outside the Christian community presumably goes back all the way to the patristic age, and, in its most important modern form, to the age of classical Protestant liberalism. As to the idea that the entity "modern man" poses peculiar problems to Christian thought, it can easily be traced back to at least the 18th century. However, what has been involved in the listening stance in recent years is much more specific.

A major presupposition has been the alleged secularized consciousness of "modern man." It is presupposed that people in the modern West share a new and widely diffused consciousness (to wit, "modern consciousness"), and that this consciousness tends to preclude, or perhaps (in the more radical versions of this view) precludes absolutely, the traditional way in which religion has looked at the world. This presupposition is an empirical one, that is, it claims to say what "modern consciousness" actually is like. Commonly, the presupposition is coupled with a positive value judgment. It is not only stated as a fact that "modern consciousness" is secularized, but it is further claimed or assumed that this secularity is cognitively superior to whatever forms of consciousness preceded it. In other words, "modern consciousness" is not only diagnosed, but given three cheers in the bargain.

The problem of contemporary consciousness and its relation to religion is an exceedingly complex one. I have elsewhere dealt with it at great length in terms of the sociology of modern religion, and I could not possibly repeat these discussions here. I can only make the following observations here (of ne-

cessity, without arguing them through): The empirical presupposition about the secularity of "modern consciousness," if taken as a hypothesis (as it should be), has a good deal of evidence in its favor. It is very likely that a structure of consciousness has developed in the modern West that is distinctive and that tends away from traditional religious *Weltanschauungen*. At the same time, both the distinctiveness and the secularity of this consciousness have almost certainly been exaggerated. Also, it has been tacitly assumed that this secularization of consciousness is progressive and irreversible—a very dubious assumption, as is becoming clearer all the time. What is more important, though, the jump from the empirical to the normative treatment of "modern consciousness" (that is, from the diagnosis to the three cheers) constitutes a lapse of logic of considerable crudity. After all, whatever "modern man" may in fact think, how can one be so sure that he is right? Could it not be that "modern consciousness," far from being the pinnacle of man's cognitive history, may rather be the result of an impoverishment in man's grasp of reality?

In the frame of reference of social science or historical scholarship, "modern man" and "modern consciousness" represent useful constructs. The debate about these constructs continues, and many issues in the debate are as yet unresolved. In the frame of reference of Christian thought, however, these same constructs have all too often become idols. "Modern man" and "modern consciousness" have not only been posited as facts, but have become golden calves around which a depressing number of Christian thinkers have staged an ongoing dance celebration. Since,



alas, no one is quite sure just what the authentic incarnations of these mythic entities are, their celebration has been constantly changing. Every couple of years or so, a new ideology has been celebrated as *the* authentic expression of "modern consciousness," or a new cultural style or social movement as the definitive avatar of "modern man." This spectacle has been going on for a good twenty years (roughly, I would say, since Bultmann's "demythologization" program became a focus of theological attention in America). It has become more frantic in the last decade, as the sense of crisis has been deepening in the American churches.

It is this particular listening stance that I would see in terms of a demoralized "culture Protestantism" in search of a new home. The search takes place on the level of theory as well as of praxis. On the theoretical level, the search is expressed by embracing this or that contemporary intellectual position as the decisive voice of modernity with which Christians ought to enter into "dialogue"—such as existentialism, various psychoanalytic doctrines, cybernetics, Marxism, and so forth. On the practical level, the search leads to passionate identification with a shifting series of cultural and socio-political phenomena—from modern urbanism to the "sensitivity" of the youth culture from the New Left to the ecology movement. "Dialogue" is very often a misleading term to describe the ensuing relationships. In many cases, it would be more apt to speak of "conversion" (and I need hardly add that I *don't* mean anybody's conversion to Christianity).

I would like to make it very clear once more that I'm *not* saying that Christians ought not to listen to others'

ideas or to take seriously what happens in their cultural *milieu* or to participate in the political struggles of the times. What troubles me is not the stance of listening as such, but that of listening with uncritical adulation if not idolatrous intent—of listening, if you will, with wide-eyed and open-mouthed wonder. Let me explicate what I mean by way of a timely example, that of the so-called counter-culture.

This is a phenomenon both new and complex, and it is probably premature (certain fashionable oracles to the contrary) to attempt a definitive evaluation. I strongly suspect that, as with almost all human creations that merit the title "culture," this one will have to be evaluated eventually in other than black-and-white terms. Personally, I find some of this culture's features quite attractive (such as its pacifism, its racial tolerance and its protest against certain pathologies of the Puritan ethic), some others simply a matter of aesthetic preference (such as its tastes in music and its peculiar fixation on bodily flora), others again quite repugnant (such as its dogmatic hedonism, its incapacity to make moral distinctions and its collectivistic "horde" mentality). I'm sure that all these valuations are debatable, that they should be debated, and that Christians will want to do so from a Christian point of view. To say this, though, is a long cry from hailing the counter-culture as a, perhaps *the*, great redemptive force of our age, as is now being done in quite a few places. The Protestant campus ministry is one such place (not everywhere, of course, but all too frequently). I understand that Christian ministry to any group will seek what Brunner used to call the *Anknüpfungspunkt*, the "point of contact" be-

tween the Christian message and the human concerns of the group. I am less ready to understand the easy transition from ministering to the Canaanites and worshipping with them at the shrines of the *ba'alim*. I may add here that the last image is used deliberately. There are striking parallels between the sacred sexuality of the counter-culture and that of the ancient Near East, and it strikes me as a measure of widespread theological bankruptcy that so few have seen this.

## II

It seems to me that, quite simply, it is time to say, "Enough!" to the dance around the golden calves of modernity. For some twenty years now we have been fascinated by the question, "What does modern man have to say to the church?" I wouldn't be too hesitant to answer, "Probably not much more than he has said so far!" We can be assured that new socio-cultural constellations will appear in our lifetime, that probably some of them will be diametrically opposed to the presently prominent ones, and that there will be those who will hail them as redemptive events. We may be confronted by gurus of a new polytheism or by a triumphantly successful ideology of the New Right, by mind-blowing new life styles originating on the surface of the moon, or by movements of fanatical asceticism among the young. Will we, in each case, have to go through the same dreary cycle of wild enthusiasm and sober second thoughts? I'm enough of a sociologist to whisper "Probably yes," but enough of a moralist to hope that (at least within the Christian community) there will be some who will disprove my sociology. It is they who, I

hope, will turn to a much more significant question. To wit: "*What does the church have to say to modern man?*"

Before I make some comments on the stance implied in this question, I would like to say something about the context in which the church may find itself in the future. I have mentioned before that the notions about the progressiveness and irreversibility of secularization have become doubtful. A number of recent works in the sociology of religion (I will only cite here those of Andrew Greeley in this country and of David Martin in England) have greatly added to this doubt (at least in my case). This does *not* mean that those of us, social scientists and others, who have analyzed the recent history of religion under the aspect of secularization have been wrong in this analysis (though we may perhaps have exaggerated the *extent* of secularization). Where some of us (myself included) may have erred, however, is in projecting the indefinite continuation of present trends in the future. Not only was this projection logically unwarranted, but there is increasing positive evidence against it. I'm referring here to the resurgence of seemingly powerful religious impulses in socio-cultural ambiances where one would least expect this in terms of the notion of progressive secularization, particularly among the young and in the college-educated upper middle class. To the extent that there, if anywhere, must be the habitat of "modern man," it seems that the latter's incapacity for religion and even for "mythological world-views" has been somewhat exaggerated.

It would be foolhardy to make firm predictions on the basis of very incomplete evidence and in a rapidly chang-

ing situation. It continues to be possible that the present upsurge of religiosity may turn out to be only a temporary disturbance in the global trend of progressive secularization. If so, Christians and others with religious *Weltanschauungen* will find themselves increasingly in a minority status (something, by the way, that is not necessarily alarming, although it has consequences that must be faced). I must admit, though, that this scenario has seemed increasingly implausible to me over the last two years or so. I have been impressed, especially in America, by a widespread and apparently deepening hunger for religious answers among people of many different sorts. But another reason why progressive secularization seems more and more doubtful lies in the very demoralization discussed before. This demoralization, of course, is not limited to the religious communities but reflects a profound crisis of belief and values in the overall society. Old convictions have been shattered, institutions are tottering, there is a widespread sense of what sociologists call *anomie*—a feeling of rootlessness, of disorientation and of the basic meanings of life being threatened. Individuals can live in such a condition, unhappy though it is, for a long time. Societies, very probably, cannot (though, of course, the phrase “a long time” means something different for a society and an individual). If historical experience is taken into account, societies afflicted with widespread *anomie* have either perished or have regenerated themselves through a renaissance of their fundamental values. For reasons that are probably deeply rooted in the constitution of man, such renaissances have usually had a powerful religious dimension.

It is considerations like these that, in my opinion, make it possible to envisage a possibly powerful reversal of the secularization process. It is clear that such a scenario hinges on many factors quite unrelated to what religious institutions may or may not do; mainly, it hinges on the general fate of the society at large. No one can say what forms, either in ideas or in social expression, such a religious resurgence might take. It hardly needs mentioning that, conceivably, the resurgence might occur *outside* the religious institutions as presently existing. Granted this scenario, however, I have two hunches about it, the second of which is very strong indeed. First, I'm very much inclined to the view that any strong renaissance of religion in American society will be *Christian*, even if it should not be located in the ambience of the historic Christian churches. It may well include the Jewish community, perhaps even in a very close relationship. I have difficulty, on the other hand, imagining a prominent place in such a renaissance for the currently fashionable oriental cults. The latter are too much in contradiction to fundamental themes of American culture, not least to the central theme of a national covenant with history that constitutes a fundamental nexus between this culture and the Judaeo-Christian tradition. It seems more plausible to me to view the current attraction of oriental religiosity as the direct result of disillusion with fundamental American values—and, *therefore*, to believe that this attraction would fade in the precise measure that there would be a revitalization of American values and a new confidence in the moral viability of American society.

My second hunch about this scenario

comes close to a certainty. It is this: *If* there is going to be renaissance of religion, its bearers will *not* be the people who have been falling all over each other to be "relevant to modern man." To the extent that modernity and secularization have been closely linked phenomena in Western history, any movement of counter-secularization would imply a repudiation of "modern man" as hitherto conceived. This is true even today, in the aforementioned religious manifestations in the youth culture and elsewhere. More important though: strong eruptions of religious faith have always been marked by the appearance of people with firm, unapologetic, often uncompromising convictions—that is, by types that are the very opposite from those presently engaged in the various "relevance" operations. Put simply: Ages of faith are not marked by "dialogue," but by *proclamation*.

"What does the church have to say to modern man?"

It is self-evident to me that this question cannot be answered in terms of the respective plausibility of this or that scenario. For the church to say *X* because it expects a new era of religiosity would be as reprehensible as the church saying *Y* because it thinks secularization to be irreversible. I assume that what the Christian community says to the world should be based on criteria of truth, *not* of socio-cultural market research or public relations. Further, it is self-evident to me that what the church has to say, in any age, is always *essentially* the same. What the church is all about is that one old story of God's dealings with man, the story that spans the Exodus and Easter morning. When all is said and done, the Christian community consists of those people who

keep on telling this story to each other and some of whom climb up on various boxes to tell the story to others. Needless to say, this is not to deny the ever-new ways in which the story falls on human ears, the different ways in which it may be told, or the vast variety of questions that may be addressed to the storytellers. The point is simply that the essence of the Christian message will remain the same if we imagine its communication to take place in catacombs or in the cathedrals of a new religious culture.

But there are very different accents in which the message is delivered. It may be delivered in tones of quiet conviction or of intransigent fanaticism, in the dull context of what is culturally taken for granted or haltingly and apologetically, or in the wonder of astonishing rediscovery. It is the combination of such accents that makes up the stance of the Christian community in any historical situation. It is in this sense that, I believe, a new stance is called for in our situation. Deliberately, and despite the danger of misunderstanding, I would like to call this a *stance of authority*.

### III

Let me try and minimize the danger of being misunderstood: I'm certainly not calling for an attitude of arrogance or of "authoritarianism." I don't mean to be misunderstood either as an advocate of theological or ecclesiastical conservatism; I am neither. Nor would I want the term "authority" to carry the breath-stopping weight of New Testament *exousia*; very few among us today would have the courage to make such a claim. Perhaps the best way to explain what I have in mind is by saying that



authority, in the sense I intend, is the opposite of the demoralization and the "failure of nerve" mentioned before. *It is the authority of those who have come to terms with their own experience and who are convinced that in however imperfect a measure, they have grasped some important truths about the human condition.*

I'm fully aware that there are situations in which such authority is hard to come by. Specifically, I think I understand rather well the processes by which secularization has undermined firm religious belief in recent history and has brought about a profound crisis of credibility for the Judaeo-Christian tradition in the West. Yet, unless much of what I have said before is grossly mistaken, the situation in which the Christian community finds itself today is more favorable to such a regaining of confidence than the situation of only a few years ago. Then it seemed that the religious tradition was put in question by the massive certitudes of the modern world; today very few of these certitudes have escaped credibility crises of their own. It is not unreasonable to draw from this a lesson of skepticism regarding the challenges to faith of these erstwhile certitudes. The more bizarre exaggerations of religious accommodation to the modern spirit (I may mention the so-called "death of God theology" in this connection) provide a useful lesson too—the one known to logicians as the reduction to absurdity. After all these doubts, sacrifices of both faith *and* intellect, and spiritual contortions, the time may have come for a simple but profoundly liberating insight—namely, that we may have known more and better than we gave ourselves credit for.

Today, especially in America, we are surrounded by hysterias of different sorts—the hysteria of those who have lost their old certitudes and the hysteria of those who, often with blind fanaticism, have committed themselves to new ones. It seems to me that Christians are in a very good position to remain free of either. I'm not suggesting that Christians are the blessed possessors of an unshakable certitude all their own, magically immune to the turmoil of the times. But after the tumbling down of all this ideological statuary, there is a good chance for a pause of recollection. Christians have much to recollect. I'm confident that, if they will only do so, the sharp illuminations of reality provided by the tradition will carry renewed conviction.

The present gathering has a primary concern for the institutional structures of the church. Although I have not spoken to this concern directly here, I would like to affirm the importance of this concern and, more specifically, of the Consultation on Church Union. Every enduring human enterprise must exist in institutional structures, and the enterprise of the Christian community is no exception. What is more, anyone concerned for the institutional structures of the American church must *ipso facto* concern himself with the existing denominations and their relations to each other. What I have had to say, therefore, in no way disparages the interests that have been associated with the Consultation on Church Union or even the (let us say) less than charismatic processes by which these interests have of necessity been expressed. I would even express the rather unfashionable opinion that there are occasions

when bureaucratic organizations may be vehicles of grace.

All the same, I would also affirm that the concern for the institutional structures of the church will be vain *unless* there is also a new conviction and a new authority in the Christian community. There will almost certainly have to be structural changes (though, I suspect, they will in the end turn out to be less drastic than many now hope or fear). There will have to be sustained thought as to the proper response of Christians to the agonizing travail of American society. It seems to me, though, that these tasks will only be meaningful to the extent that the Christian community regains its "nerve," and succeeds in achieving a new stance of confidence in itself and its message.

Intellectuals like to anticipate "historic moments," and some of my observations suggest that the Christian community in America might be on the eve of such a "historic moment." Cau-

tion and skepticism are very much in order with regard to such anticipations. All history is in the hands of God, and it seems that God is parsimonious in the enactment of "historic moments." Those who anticipate the latter with breathless impatience may grow old in the process. Even worse, those who thought that one such moment had actually come upon them may have to recognize later that they made a terrible mistake. If there is a sense of waiting in the American churches today, it may be said on a deeper level that the Christian community is *always* called to wait. Yet there *are* those moments in which God's presence in history manifests itself in lightning. I suppose that, as Christians, we always hope we may experience such a moment at least once in our lifetime. Our waiting is marked by this hope. Presumably the best we can do is to wait in a stance that will permit us to see the lightning when it flashes across the horizon.

# The Campus Ministry and the Crisis in Authority

by MARVIN P. HOOGLAND

THE crisis in authority that is spoken of in many contexts today affects the campus ministry and the campus minister at every turn. In this respect the campus ministry is not essentially different from the ministry of the church elsewhere: every church and every minister is confronted by the challenge to authority that characterizes our age. But those involved in a campus ministry find themselves situated at the place where the crisis is probably most acute, always near and often over the boiling point. They cannot pretend that the crisis does not exist. They soon realize the futility of hoping that it is only a passing phase. They learn that they must come to terms with it in one way or another.

The fact that one is located where the crisis is most acute does not of itself mean that he is best qualified to analyze the problem correctly or to propose the right solution. Proximity to a crisis may blur one's perspective. Those at a greater distance may be better able to see the issue of authority in a less distorted context than someone on campus is able to do. To be engaged in a campus ministry requires taking seriously the attitudes and feelings of those on campus with whom one works. But to do so is to run the risk of becoming more a part of the problem than a means to a new solution, an agitator of the crisis rather than a healer of the wounds. Campus ministries are thus sometimes themselves accused of undermining the au-

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thority of the church and weakening respect for it at a time when permissiveness is all too rampant already.

How widely this kind of criticism is brought against campus ministries I do not really know. I do know that campus ministers are deeply concerned about it, concerned with listening to the rest of the church and concerned as well with speaking both to the church and for the church. The following reflections on the crisis in authority as seen from one campus are not offered as a final solution or even as the best and only diagnosis but only in the hope that they will stimulate others in the church—old and young, town and gown—to strive together in proving what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect, with respect to the question of authority.

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Let me try to describe the situation on campus as I see it. The picture cannot be painted with a single brush stroke. No single attitude toward authority can adequately characterize the campus. There are those on campus, as elsewhere, who simply *accept* authority, who desire an authoritative answer to most questions. They are sympathetic with the demand for stronger police forces and stricter enforcement of the law. They want university administrators to take a hard line and the church to preach a censorious word in the name of God against all who flout au-



thority, whether that of the state, the school, the church, or the moral law. Such voices are, however, fewer and less vocal on campus than elsewhere. One might presume that the crisis in authority does not exist for students such as these; yet they are affected by it and respond to it in their own way.

More common on campus are those who are ready to *question* authority. They do not readily agree, for example, that our phased withdrawal from Vietnam is in the best interest of our nation on the simple basis that the President of the United States, supported by his advisors, declares it to be so. They may question the President's motives or the validity of his reading of the facts. They subject to scrutiny and judgment his order of priorities and the direction of his moral leadership. Similarly, they do not accept or even tolerate certain regulations and policies simply because university officials judge them necessary for the well-being of the academic community. They openly and persistently question long-held viewpoints and practices of the church; they do not docilely accept them on the authority of the minister or the church.

Should we not in conscience and on Christian principle be opposed to all war? Is homosexuality (and the homosexual) to be condemned? Are pre-marital sexual relations necessarily wrong? Should not abortion laws be abolished and abortion even encouraged in many cases? Is there any usefulness to a second formal worship service on Sunday? Why not experiment with new forms of worship? Are the creeds of the church serviceable today, and the doctrines relevant? Do we need an ordained, full-time clergy? Do we even need an organized church? The ques-

tions are endless, with no boundaries, and are asked in earnest. No simple appeal to an authority will suffice to answer or to silence them or to prevent the askers from seeking new answers. Where a campus ministry is being carried on, it is most often confronted by this questioning mentality and must work with it.

But it is a small step to the next attitude: that of simple *disregard* for authority. Does the President insist on sending men to fight in Vietnam? I won't go. Does the church insist on holding a second service? Fine, if it wants to, but I'll stay home—without a guilty conscience. Is pre-marital sex still condemned from the pulpit as fornication? My personal relationship with my fiancé is for us to work out, not for the preacher to dictate. You say that Paul teaches that wives are to be in subjection to their husbands? How quaint! I'm for women's liberation. Here earnest questioning of authority is followed by attitudes and actions that simply ignore or dismiss authority as irrelevant, at least in particular instances. It may be said that people have always disobeyed authority at times; the point now is that many are doing so without feeling the least guilty about it, or even imagining that they ought to feel guilty.

There are those, finally, who go beyond ignoring authority. They not only disregard it but show *contempt* for it. They call the President a "damned fascist" and the police "pigs." They scream at judges and taunt university officials. They mock institutions and desecrate the flag. They carry their contempt to acts of hatred and violence. They hurl stones at police, and bomb university buildings. They are the farther extreme, the small minority on

campus who are violent revolutionaries, bent on destroying the present structures of society and the authority that underlies them. To the relief of many, these have been less in the forefront in the past year than they were in the previous year.

Campus ministries exist in the midst of this kind of environment; they did not and do not create it. This is the "world" to which they seek to minister and to bring the word of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ. That word is not a "maybe" or a "possibly"; it is a divine imperative. But how is the authority contained in that divine imperative to be expressed and communicated where no authority is unquestioningly accepted, where much authority is commonly disregarded and even held in contempt? That question forces itself on every campus ministry. It cannot be evaded or treated in a merely academic manner on campus. And because the campus ministry is the *church's* ministry on campus, the question ought not and cannot be brushed aside by the church as a whole.

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One possible response to the crisis in authority is to *demand* a new respect for an obedience to authority. Such a demand can be made in various ways, both in word and in deed. The proclamation of the word can include denunciations of those who question or reject authority, whether of the state, the university, the church, or the home. One can attempt to arouse new feelings of guilt for any resistance to authority. This word can be the positive one that submission to authority *is* the divine imperative. The corresponding deed is to accept into full fellowship

only those who are responsive to this authoritarian approach, submissive to the authorities in question.

Such a response to the crisis in authority may appear bold and decisive. It will, however, have the effect of further alienating many young people, and some who are older, from the church and the message she brings. Such a response will appear as, and probably be, an evasion of the real questions that are intense and urgent for those who ask them. It will be dismissed as another futile and dismaying attempt to find security in the past or in the status quo. Those who yearn for authoritarian answers to their questions, eagerly embrace them, and seek to impose them on others, will be regarded as insecure—too immature and frightened to accept the responsibility of living in a changing world and facing up to new issues. Calling for a new respect for authority as such will in fact achieve the opposite of the intended result, namely, continued and possibly increased disregard of and contempt for authority.

In saying this, one opens himself to the charge that he is abetting the permissiveness, the anarchy, the breakdown of authority that is the characteristic evil of our times. Such a charge, however, assumes that the real problem of our times is the lack of respect for authority. Young people, students in particular, are thought to be rebelling against authority for the sake of rebellion and anarchy itself. I do not find this to be the case in many instances. I do not find many students who are against authority for the sake of being against authority. I do find them resentful of any authority that perpetuates itself for its own sake and sees itself as its own justification. They are rebelling against

authority that is externally imposed without sufficient regard to the inner justification of what is being called for. The real problem is not so much how to reinforce respect for authority, therefore, as it is how to exercise or embody an authority that is inherently respectable.

If this is the case, we can better lay aside our direct concern over the "crisis in authority" and refocus our concern on those questions and issues that do arise from time to time, so that we can discover and present an authentic Christian and Biblical address to them.

The situation today is in some respects parallel to that which the medieval church faced when it was confronted by the Renaissance and the Reformation. The medieval church saw its own authority being challenged and weakened, and in a state of alarm it chose to reinforce that authority by the use of external means: the excommunication of Martin Luther and the authoritarian decisions of the Council of Trent. This course led ultimately to the formal declaration of papal infallibility in the 19th century. Only in recent decades has the Roman Catholic Church finally shown itself capable of renewal, and this has come largely through a deliberate attempt to shift the focal point of authority from the formal and external side to the inherent meaning and power of the gospel itself. That this shift is not occurring without an immense and painful struggle is evident in the conflict that has emerged recently between Hans Küng and Karl Rahner over the issue of papal infallibility.

We who stand in the tradition of the Reformation should be the first to recognize that a present-day "crisis in authority" cannot be satisfactorily met by

renewed application of an old externally imposed authority. We should be the first to recognize that submission to such externally imposed authority, even where it does occur, is not to be identified with acceptance of the divine imperative.

The Old Testament prophets already pointed to the coming reign of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit when they spoke of the time when the law of God would be written on the hearts of men, and no one would need another to instruct him (Jeremiah 31:33-34). The final fulfillment of that promise has obviously not yet arrived, but the new age has begun in Christ and is—or should be—reflected in the life and working of the church. Jesus came and spoke as one having authority, and not as the scribes (Matthew 7:28). Their authority was external, by outward tradition and compulsion, not excluding force; his was by the inherent power of what he said not only, but of what he did as well (John 10:38). There was an inner compulsion to his message and to his life. To use a traditional term, his authority, like that of the Scriptures, was self-authenticating. This is not to say that it was automatically accepted. Many still rejected it. But in either case, they were then at least placed before the authentic decision of accepting or rejecting the Christ and God, something that does not happen when authority is an external imposition and demand.

The church as an institution can probably survive for a long time (witness the Roman Catholic Church) by relying on a largely formal and external exercise of authority. But by doing so, it will not serve well as an instrument for the Kingdom of Christ nor be a

mediator of his authority in the world of today. The authority of Christ cannot be upheld, for example, through blind and rigid enforcement of a formula of subscription by which 20th century questions never envisaged by our 16th century creeds are nonetheless thought to be answered by those creeds once for all, with little room left for discussion or new insights. The authority of Christ is not enhanced when self-appointed groups within the church take it upon themselves to raise suspicion and initiate ecclesiastical proceedings against professors and others who are wrestling with new problems or striving to provide new insight into old questions. When issues like evolution and abortion, for example, cannot be aired openly without threat of ecclesiastical discipline, little room is left for the inherent authority of the gospel to be exercised in relation to such questions.

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How, then, should the church respond to the lack of respect for authority that seems to characterize our times? Not by redoubling its efforts to enforce respect for authority, whether it be that of the state, or the church, or the university, or the home. Not by attempting to hand down authoritative and binding decrees on all questions that arise. But by attempting to deal responsibly with the questions and concerns of people, young or old, as they arise in the church and in our society and world—and to let the message of the gospel unashamedly shed its light on those questions. When questions concerning the worship service arise, we need to be responsive to those

questions in terms of what worship itself really is. We must wrestle with questions of doctrine in terms of the one central message of the gospel that calls us to faith in Jesus Christ. The answers we give to the many moral questions being raised anew today will have to reflect a serious wrestling with them. Most important of all, the total life of the church must come to reflect the love and concern of Christ for those who are oppressed by their own sin and by the injustices of society.

When the church proclaims Jesus Christ and his call to love and discipleship, however, and then for whatever reason excludes or even tolerates the exclusion of black children from her Christian schools, there the church by its life destroys the credibility of its authority and loses its right to speak in Jesus' name.

When the church genuinely begins to live the love of Christ, at whatever cost, we will not have to be concerned about the so-called crisis in authority. We will not have to resort to artificial props to bolster respect for that authority. What is needed, on campus and elsewhere, is not more insistence on respect for authority as such but a more convincing demonstration that the authority of Christ's word is taken seriously in the life and action of the church and its members, and that the way followed and commended by the state and the university is inherently worthwhile and morally compelling.

Christian campus ministries are, without exception, dedicated to this task of the church in bearing witness to the Lord whose Word is not yes and no but yes and amen.



# A Christian Perspective on South Africa

by ALAN C. PATON

I am very glad to have this opportunity of speaking in your church this morning and naturally I ask myself the question as to how I should use it. I took advice from some members of your church, and it seems quite clear that I am not expected to preach an ordinary sermon. You may be quite sure that I won't preach an *extraordinary* one!

It seems clear that some people would like me to say something about my own country. But this is nevertheless a service of worship—it's not a lecture room or a platform—so I will try to say something about South Africa as it is seen by a Christian; not a very good one I must admit, but one who, in his own way, which is very largely determined by his temperament and by his nature, by his weaknesses and by his strengths, has tried to take seriously the Great Commandment and the teachings of the parables, among which is the example of the Good Samaritan about which we heard this morning.

You will remember that Jesus told this parable for a specific reason: to define the meaning of the word "neighbor." Now as with all his parables he defined the meanings of words and ideals and principles, not in abstractions, but by making them come alive in the acts of men and women. "What man is there among you who has only one

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sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not go and lift it out?" "Behold, a sower went forth to sow." "For the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant looking for pearls." "Those things which come out of the mouth come from the heart and they defile a man." "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and he loses his own soul." "Unless you become as a child, you cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven." Jesus did not preach sermons on forgiveness. He said, "Don't forgive seven times, forgive seventy times seven." And he told the story of the prodigal son who was forgiven so prodigally by his father. And last of all, he was himself a man—the son of man. And when he came forth wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe Pilate was moved to say, "Behold the man." So with the teaching of the word "neighbor": it was a certain man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he was attacked by other men who left him for dead and at least two other men saw him lying there and passed him by. And then came the third man and bound up his wounds and put him on his beast and took him to an inn and paid for his care. This man proved to be his neighbor; but, what was more, he was a Samaritan—a despised man.

So this address is given to you this

morning by a person who has no claim to holiness of life, but who by great fortune of upbringing and circumstances learned that the Christian religion, unless it has this deep concern for men and women and children and boys and girls, for the sick and the hungry and the prisoner, for the poor and the humble, for the neighbor no matter what kind of person he may be; unless it has this concern it's not the Christian religion at all, but it is something pretending to be such. And therefore although I cannot make any of these claims, I could not and would not be able to deny food or shelter or opportunity to develop all the talents which have been given to anyone—opportunity to live life with self respect and dignity to any man or woman or child, and, least of all, would one be able to deny these things on the grounds of race or color. Yet I live in a country where this is often done, and I am going to try to tell you about it as truthfully as I am able.

We have about as many people in our country as you have in yours, and a very different composition, but we have about 21 million people. Of these, 15 million are African people, belonging, however, to more than one tribe and language—Zulus, Basuto, Xhosa, the Bawenda, and so forth. The number of white people in the country number  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million, and they are the rulers of the whole twenty-one. Of these  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million, approximately 40% are English speaking and 60% are Afrikaans. In addition to that, we have two million people whom we call colored people.

We have a very polite convention in South Africa that these colored people are the offspring of Malay slaves, Bushmen and Hottentot, and their white

blood comes from passing soldiers and sailors. Our own contribution to that, which is quite extraordinary, we do not like to mention. We also have about  $\frac{2}{3}$  million Indian people—people from India itself who were brought out to Natal in 1860 to work on the cane plantations, and who today live mostly in the province of Natal.

### *Present: Apartheid*

Now the policy of controlling the lives and destinies of these 21 million people is the policy which is known as *apartheid*. It has been given a new name, but it's still the same thing. It's the keeping separate of every racial group.

I may say that one cannot blame any recent government entirely for this development because it is a tradition which is centuries old in South Africa. We like to believe that it is God's will. Having created these nations it is thought it is God's will that they should be kept separate. (But that didn't prevent us from creating another race altogether and that was the colored people.) It wasn't until 1928 in fact that extra-marital sexual relations between white people and non-white people were made a criminal offense, and it wasn't until 1949 that marriage between white people and non-white people was forbidden. In 1948 the Nationalist party came to power and they had long proclaimed their intention of bringing about the total separation of the races in schools, churches, universities, hotels, restaurants, buses, trains, beaches, cinemas, theatres, residential areas, the professions and all other occupations.

Such a program the world had never seen before, but it should nevertheless be noted that it was an *extensio ad*

*absurdum* of a discrimination which already existed. Our first national prime minister was Dr. Malan, and we like to look back to him now and say, "Well, he wasn't a bad fellow after all." Our second prime minister was Mr. Strydom, and we like to look back and say, "Well, he was not such a bad fellow after all." Our third prime minister was Dr. Verwoerd, and he was easily the most outstanding of them all. And under him a considerable change took place.

I would like to make it quite clear to you, however, that this considerable change is only in our own South African context. The people from the outside world observing it would not regard it as a considerable change at all, and many non-white people living in South Africa would not regard it as a considerable change either. This change, nevertheless, was brought about because of the incessant pressure from the rest of the world.

So *apartheid* became a new thing; it became the policy of separate development. No longer did you push a man aside because of the color of his skin or because of his race. The reason now why you put him aside is so that he may develop along his own lines, that he may maintain his own culture and his own language, and that he may attain complete independence in due course. In other words, it's a kind of a multi-national theory. We don't pretend that we in South Africa are one nation. I've lost count, but I think it's eight, or nine, or ten nations that we have.

The unpleasant features of *apartheid*, unfortunately, have not disappeared. Separate development is a wonderful theory, and if I were on a different side from the one I am on, I'm sure I would

be able to hold you spellbound by telling you of the virtues of allowing people to maintain their own cultures and their own languages, their own homelands, and everything. The antagonism of the world, however, does not seem to diminish. We are told that in due course these injustices and cruelties (because, you see, you can't take a nation of 21 million people that got terribly mixed up in the course of three centuries and suddenly start separating them all again without being very cruel) will in time disappear—rather like the Communist state which in time is going to wither away. At the moment unfortunately these two processes are proceeding at a fairly even pace.

But, as I say, the antagonism of the world still remains. The antagonism towards white South Africa in the realm of sport is very great indeed, and we are slowly being excluded—rapidly even—from all international sport. In other areas, notably the area of trade, there are no noticeable changes to be seen because no nation really likes to be very honorable and proud and lose its trade with other countries as a consequence of doing so.

Now there's another side to this coin. You can't carry out Draconian measures of this kind without taking to yourself tremendous power, and so we live under a government which has taken to itself tremendous powers over the lives and destinies of human beings. The Suppression of Communism Act which can be used to suppress anybody, whether he's a Communist or not, has been used to suppress many of my own friends. Banishing—banishing people from one part of the country to another, restricting people in their movements, and most terrible of all, house arrest.



Some of you may have read in the papers of the case of Mrs. Helen Joseph who has been house arrested now for almost ten years and lives in a small house by herself; she is allowed to go to work at seven in the morning and must be back at six o'clock at night; she is allowed no visitors of any kind. The most terrible thing about this restriction and this house arrest is that one is virtually cut off from all communication with one's fellow human beings. It does occasionally happen that both a husband and a wife are house arrested, in which case the authorities give very gracious permission that the husband may speak to the wife and vice versa. Detention without charge or trial—totally secret detention, in which one has no access to any member of one's family nor even to a lawyer.

The powers of the security police are immense, and yet externally the country appears to be peaceful and ordered. On our way here, my wife and I spent three days in Brazil in the great city of Rio de Janeiro, and the external appearance there is also one of peace, order, relaxation, happiness. It is very difficult for a casual visitor to a country to understand what really happens there.

So there has arisen in South Africa, as there has arisen in your great neighbour, the United States, a very deep conflict between those who believe that the life of man in society should be characterized by freedom, and those who believe just as firmly that the life of man in society should rather be characterized by law and order. When I was young there was no opposition between these two things. I was taught to believe, and I believe it to this day, that you cannot have freedom if you do not not have law and order, and you cannot

have law and order if you have no freedom. So that really this opposition is a false one. But nevertheless it has caused a dilemma among many South Africans, especially since the World Council of Churches has given a gift to resistance fighters in Africa. This has caused a great outcry in South Africa because our churchmen say it is a direct support of violence, and violence is contrary to the will of Christ.

I won't give you the arguments, but all I can say to you is that if you live in South Africa as I do, then you hope and pray that the solutions to your country's problems will not be through violence. But I am white, and I am privileged, and if I were not white and were not privileged it could well be that I would see the whole question of violence in quite a different context. And it appears quite clear that the World Council of Churches also sees this question in quite a different context.

### *Future: Servanthood*

I'll say a few words about the future—not many, as I think anyone who says too much about the future is rather foolish. There is undoubtedly an attitude of great questioning amongst our young people in South Africa today—white, black, Indian and colored. There's great questioning going on amongst our young church people in South Africa today who cannot accept the conventions and beliefs of their elders particularly in the field of race. I suppose you know there is no more terrible thing you can do than to bring politics into religion. Well, those of you who know (I hope I'm not being presumptuous) what Christianity is about know that you can't divorce politics

from religion. As a matter of fact, one of the great offenses of our time is that we have thrown religion out of politics in many ways.

But when I say there is hope in this increasing non-conformism among our young people who are questioning these racial attitudes and these racial dogmas, at the same time I must also confess to you that forty years ago, one of our leading statesmen, Mr. J. D. Hofmeyr, whose life I wrote, was saying the same thing. This was forty years ago and those young people of whom he spoke are today in their fifties and sixties. But, as you know, there is a great temptation placed in the path of young people that they have these great ideals when they are young and when they're students; and then they get married and have children and get jobs in high positions and acquire status, and they don't feel quite the same about the reform of society as they did when they were young.

There is also a growing uneasiness and restlessness inside Afrikaanerdom itself, inside the 60% of the white people of the country. This is also, to a person like myself, very encouraging. But I can understand a person who is waiting desperately to get a better chance in life saying, "How long must I wait for these changes to take place?" And then, on the other side, you have a growing militance on the part of black people too. For example, our black students have broken away from the national union of students and have established their own South African student organization, and undoubtedly one of their themes is that "black is beautiful." Now I mustn't exaggerate the strength of this movement. For sooner or later the leaders of this move-

ment will also encounter the security police as so many of my friends did in the past.

Now the last conclusion that I'd like to make in regard to the future is this: that one of the great lessons history teaches us is that the future is unpredictable. You may certainly learn something from the past, but that isn't going to tell you everything about the future. Now that is one reason why a Christian may not live without hope; namely, that the future is unpredictable. One has no right to say that the future is completely dark and that there is no hope for anything; no one should just lie down and do nothing.

You will remember Bunyan's story of Christian and the lions—how he was afraid to go on his journey to the heavenly kingdom because of these two lions, one on either side of the road. I'm always disappointed about that story of Christian because I was hoping that he would have said, "Well, I must go." But unfortunately someone said to him, a voice said to him, "Don't be afraid of those lions, they're chained so you can go through quite safely," and he went through quite safely.

But there's another reason why a Christian may not be without hope, and that is in the gospel itself: the good news that it is our destiny to be the light of the world. We are not merely the creatures of circumstance and we are not bound by the bonds of our past. Now very often this may not appear to be so. The future appears to be dark and the bonds of the past appear to be unbreakable, and the present is full of misery. The newspapers, the radio, and the TV certainly don't announce any good news, but reports of wars, and violence, and disasters. I believe, however,

there is only one way in which we may break out of these bonds. There is only one way in which we can hope to come to terms with the mystery of the universe. You remember what Paul said about the universe. He said, "The whole creation groans and travails, even until today." Now that was a very extraordinary thing to say: there's something that is quite incomprehensible about the creation, about its wars, and its suffering, and its disasters, early bereavement, painful death—all these things we have to encounter during the course of our lives. Jesus himself said that offenses must come, as though there were also some kind of law of the universe—that offenses must come—however good God may be.

How are we to come to terms with a universe of that kind? This troubles many Christians for they want to know what God is doing; they want to know why one has to bear and suffer to this extent. Now I myself do not presume to answer these questions, and I too know that there is something incomprehensible about the universe. Moreover, there's something about the nature of the Creator of the universe which I cannot fully comprehend either. But I cannot wait for these questions to be answered, nor can you, and especially if you're young you can't, because you have to live right now. And I cannot spend my life in reviling the creation and the Creator, because it's the only life I have.

When I was a student, I came under the influence of the Student Christian movement, and I learned then that the only satisfying kind of life was the life which was used in service, and that one can only be master of oneself if one becomes a servant of others. But it was

only in later life that I learned that the only way in which one can endure the wounds of creation is to allow one's own life to be used for the healing of them. I'm sure this really was, in a way, re-learning what I had learned when I was young, but I certainly learned it in a deeper way when I was old.

That brings me to the man who taught me this lesson and his name was Francis of Assisi. One of the stories, one of the Christian stories, which most moved me in the course of my life was of this young man riding his gaily caparisoned horse along a road in the Umbrian Plain and suddenly seeing in the road a sight that was most dreaded by the men and women of that time—a leper. Suddenly he is moved by some uncontrollable emotion and he gets down from his horse and goes and embraces the leper and kisses the rotted stumps of his arms. And the story goes that the leper, seeing that Francis was afire with love, embraced him also. Then Francis gave him alms and got back on his horse. There's a legend, which is added to the story, that after he'd ridden on a few paces he turned around and there was no one on the road at all and then he knew that it was the Lord. Francis did not revile leprosy; he didn't revile the Creator for having made leprosy, but he asked himself to be made the instrument of the peace of God. And from that day his whole life was changed, and not only his whole life but the life of countless thousands of men and women who also had this new vision of the way in which their own lives could be used.

### *Goal: Spiritual Maturity*

Therefore, the task of the Christian in the world is to heal its wounds and

this is the task of the Church also. This means, and it cannot mean anything else, that there is a continual tension between the Church and the world. The Church, being human as well as divine, cannot help being corrupted by the kind of society in which it is placed. We have that very bitter story in South Africa of a black man who is cleaning the church and another man comes in and says, "What are you doing in here?" And he says, "I'm cleaning the church." And he said, "That's all right, but God help you if you pray."

The great danger that confronts the Church is not that it should be corrupted; the great danger is that it should not be aware it is being corrupted; it identifies itself with the society in which it is placed. This morning in the prayer of confession we said these words—this is the way in which we as Christians and we as a church should approach these things—"We have not given ourselves in love and service to the world as Christ gave himself for us and everyone," and that is a thing we should continually remember and continually repeat. We have not done it, and I'm afraid many of us in South Africa think we have done it.

It's very important that this tension between what you are and what you aspire to be should be the creative force in your whole life and it should be the creative force in the life of the Church. When you find no tension between what you are and what you aspire to be, then that's the end of your spiritual life. That was the great temptation of the German churches under Hitler. Under the tremendous pressure of that tremendous authority, many churchmen and churches were willing to believe that Hitler was in some way an

instrument of providence. Well, he may have been an instrument of providence, but he was certainly not an instrument of that kind. He was an instrument of punishment. That undoubtedly is the temptation for every church in the world when its nation goes to war. That was what tore the Japanese churches from top to bottom during the Second World War because the Japanese government wanted the churches to work and pray, not for peace and justice, but for victory.

We have in our country, as you have here, a sect known as Jehovah's Witnesses. Now their particular religion has no attraction for me whatsoever. But what I have the greatest admiration for is the courage of these young men in South Africa who will go to jail month after month after month, rather than take up arms, because they believe that in this particular case there is a commandment of God which is above the commandment of the State. I regret to say that in South Africa we are very tempted to believe that the commandments of the State and the commandments of God are one and the same thing.

One of the greatest writings of this century, I think, is a very small book and it's called *Dying We Live*; it is the last letters of men and women, some of them very young, who gave up their lives rather than yield to Hitler. Every Christian should read it. When we think the future is dark and the world is hopeless and there's nothing more to be done, then one should read of the lives of these young people and the cheerful way in which they gave them up rather than yield to what they felt was evil.

When the World Council of Churches



gave this gift to the resistance fighters some of our politicians came out and challenged the churches to say whether they were for South Africa or against. Now that's not a relevant question for a church. A relevant question for a church is whether you are for or against the teachings of the Lord. It may be, and I believe that in 1939 it was more so than in 1914, that many young men felt they had a need to go and fight for what they thought was just. But the first duty and allegiance of the Church must always be to Christ and not to any state. Therefore this tension of which I spoke is inevitable. Yet it must be there, and it would be much worse for us if it were not. This tension between what we are and what we aspire to be should always be in ourselves as well.

I would just like to say one last thing. When I say that our churches in South Africa are very subject to this temptation to identify goodness with the policies of the state, then I must also say that we have some very notable exceptions in every church, including those churches which are nearest to the government in political belief, and those are the Dutch Reform churches. A man

who was Moderator of one of the most powerful of the Dutch Reform churches eight years ago is today nobody. I'm speaking of Dr. Beyers Naude who today has lost the power he had as a very eminent churchman. But he has acquired a rather entirely different kind of power. He has acquired a much greater spiritual power even though his temporal power has declined. And one thing I'd like to say here is very important: that the lead and the initiative and responsibility of maintaining this tension mustn't be left to priests and ministers. It has to be just as much undertaken by laymen and laywomen. Another thing also is very important: we should never allow any cleavage to grow up in any Christian congregation between those who are what one might call activists—active reformers of society—and those whose natures and temperament incline them to be rather pietist. A very great responsibility falls upon the minister to see that such a cleavage does not take place.

"Beloved, now we are the sons of God and it does not yet appear what we shall be."



# Easter and Political Theology

by ROBERT KRESS

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THE relevance of the Church, of the Christian, of Christ has always been a problem for the Church. Hence we have the earliest apologias, in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles of St. Paul, whereby the apostles try to show that belief in Christ, that membership in the Church of Christ are valuable and that they are not destructive of the human being. Rather, they are the true fulfillment of the human being. In the present age, especially since the Second World War and perhaps especially through the influence of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a new approach to traditional apologetics has arisen. This new approach is called political theology or ecclesiology. The attempt of the theologians who practice this so-called political ecclesiology or theology is to show that religion and especially the Christian religion are not contributors to the oppression and alienation of man, at least not necessarily so. Political theology is then the response of contemporary believers to the age-old question: Can a human being become a Christian without destroying himself? Further, does the Christian Church, however it may be structured, deserve to continue to exist in the modern world? And finally, if it does, does it really make a valuable contribution to the development of mankind?

The problem of Christian apologetics

has been acute especially since the French Enlightenment with its challenge to Christian institutions. Although the Enlightenment did not find God or Jesus unappealing, it certainly did not generate much enthusiasm for the institutions of Christianity, and this whether those institutions were basically Roman Catholic or Protestant. Freud stating that religion is basically an illusion has also been greatly influential. But the most serious challenge to the Christian religion has been the reaction to Hegel who professed to be the culmination of the development of all Christian philosophy up to his time. For the ideologies of Feuerbach and Marx, philosophy is not the queen of sciences and much less so is theology. Insofar as these are speculative or theoretical enterprises, they are simply inadequate. For Marx and Feuerbach emphasis is always on the social dimension of human existence, especially on social reform. Therefore they do not approach religion directly or theologically, but rather from the viewpoint of the *socialist*, that is from the viewpoint of religion's role in society. They are concerned with religion, here the Christian churches, insofar as they cause or further the alienation of man from himself, from others, from nature, from his work and its product. Their criticism of religion is a direct challenge to the Christian Church

to show that it does not in fact alienate man. Today the Christian apologist's task is defined by the Marxist slogan that religion is the opium of the people. By virtue of their Christian belief are people motivated and do they in fact accept all manner of social injustice as their due lot? In order to survive their present misery and oppression, do they invent all sorts of satisfactions which they will receive—but only on the other side in the "sweet bye and bye"? Does man, experiencing himself as alienated, invent God which is really what man wants to be? Are God and all those things connected with God,—religion, Christ, Church,—really the cause, the support, the substructure of man's alienation? And aren't the doctrines of the Resurrection and heaven especially conducive to acquiescence in and acceptance of man's present misery?

To deny that the religions, even and perhaps especially the Christian religion, have had a condoning role in the oppression of the working classes would be terribly naive and simply untrue. Early Capitalism is clearly a history of man's exploitation and his alienation. It is also clear that the churches did not play a critical role in this development. Not only that, but too frequently they were at least indirectly involved in supporting the capitalist regime and its exploitations. When a worker in a factory in England during the early days of the Industrial Revolution was asked whether he did not object to being beaten while he was at work, he replied, "No, it is really good for me, for otherwise I might fall asleep and fall into the machinery and be severely injured." It is well known that it was the custom of factory owners and of the industrialists to bring preachers to the factories to en-

courage the workers to be diligent, loyal, hardworking, honest. Furthermore, the drudgery and the injustice the workers endured were frequently explained as God's will, even as punishment for the sin and evil the workers themselves had committed as well as for the evil of the world in general. The workers were to make expiation for the sins of the world by their own slavery and exploitation. Thus the injustice they suffered was transformed by Christianity into a source of virtue.

In the United States of America, of course, we had our own problem, slavery. And the complaint that the Christian religion was used to support the society that enslaved and exploited Black people is clear and undeniable. The slave theology placed all emphasis on endurance in this life—of suffering, pain, exploitation, alienation, if you will. But all this was bearable because in the future they would pass through the "pearly gates" into a city whose streets were lined with gold. For the Black slave, heaven becomes not so much a reward for virtue on earth, certainly not the gift of God who loves him, but a bribe or a sort of very, very delayed reparations for the injustices and evil that were forced upon him in this life.

We are familiar with this kind of religion or theology in the terminology of "Pie in the sky, bye and bye." There is no doubt that heaven is promised as an indescribable consolation and reward (1 Cor. 2:9 with 2 Cor. 12:4). But it is certainly not to play the role which has frequently been assigned to it, namely to enable people to tolerate and submit to evil in this world because they are going to receive good things in the next. That is precisely not the right

conclusion. The question urges itself, though, is this the true or only possible interpretation of Christianity? And the answer of course is, "No."

Religion is not chiefly or primarily alienating, at least not the Christian religion. It is neither anti-life nor anti-human. In fact, the "pie in the sky" interpretation of the message of Jesus, of the doctrines of heaven and the resurrection, is precisely the wrong interpretation of Christianity. It is not wrong in just any way, it is precisely wrong. The Christian believes that in the death and resurrection of Jesus sin and evil, even death, have been overcome and conquered. If he really believes that evil is not the last word, that sin is not the last word, that death is not the last word, then he cannot accept or acquiesce in any evil whatsoever. If he is at all logical, he must see that the destruction of the greatest evil, namely sin and death, requires on his part the destruction of all lesser evils. The Christian may never conclude that because there is heaven later on, he may tolerate and submit to evil now. That would be precisely the wrong interpretation and that is what the "pie in the sky" theology has in fact done.

For the Christian, the resurrection indeed provides the possibility, the horizon, the motive for social involvement and action rather than flight from the world. It is precisely because he believes in the conquering of death by Jesus through his resurrection that the Christian more than anyone else can confidently attack evil and all those things which are against life. If death has been overcome, this greatest of all anti-life forces, then certainly no lesser evil can be logically and consequently tolerated. He who believes in Jesus believes in

him "who by dying destroyed our death and by rising restored our life" (Easter preface of the Roman liturgy). The proper sequence and conclusion, then, is that because of the resurrection of Jesus which destroyed the evil of death, the believing Christian must try to destroy that evil which is the companion of death and which persists even now.

In fact, the gospels are written within the horizon of the resurrection. They show what Christ, what his resurrection means—after the fact of the resurrection. Thus the ministry of Jesus is presented as casting out devils, healing the sick, preaching to the poor (Luke 7:22). Thus structured, the gospels are not so much to prepare for the resurrection as to explain it after it has actually happened. In view of the victory over death which Jesus accomplished in his death and resurrection, his entire life and ministry is understood to be the destruction of evil. Thus he is properly understood as the Redeemer-Messiah, the son of God, only after the destruction of all evil by his death and forgiveness of all men has been revealed in his resurrection.

The same must be understood of the ethics of Jesus. He requires not the limitation of evil—let us say by casuistry or by situation ethics—but simply the total eradication of all evil. If our justice does not exceed that of the Pharisees (Matt. 5:20), we are not doing what Jesus wants. We would not be what he wants because our lives would be concerned with limiting evil, but not with simply getting rid of it. In the resurrection of Jesus, the greatest evil—death which came through sin—is destroyed. In that pattern we must live and not in some less total, less absolute spirit. Although the ethics of Jesus thus seem to be im-

possible, they are not impossible. For God does not *demand* the impossible, he *gives* it (Mark 10:27). Hence we are not allowed to conclude that we may accept evil in any respect or degree whatsoever. But we only know that the complete eradication of evil is not impossible because Jesus destroyed death by his death and resurrection. In other words, the ethics of the Christian is based on the life of Jesus and the life of Jesus is one of completely excluding evil from the world and man. No evil, not even death, is to be tolerated. Therefore Jesus had to suffer and die, yes, but he had also to be raised from death, for if death continues, certainly the reign of sin continues (Luke 9:22, 24:26; Acts 3:18; 1 Cor. 15:12-19). Indeed, in the gospel of Matthew, Jesus promises his Church not so much that it will resist sin, but that it will resist the kingdom or the gates of death (Matt. 16:18). And he does this because death is the fruit and manifestation of sin (Rom. 5:12). It is indeed, according to St. Paul, the last enemy to be destroyed (1 Cor. 15:26), but it is to be destroyed, clearly and without doubt. As Christians we believe that this has already been accomplished in Jesus and that it is being accomplished in the world by the Christian who believes and who has died with Christ in Baptism, whose life then is already dead to sin and alive only to God (Rom. 6:2). Furthermore, according to Jesus, God is not the God of the dead but the God of the living (Luke 20:38). Therefore death cannot be the ultimate, the final word in the world. It cannot be the horizon of our creaturely being. Rather God, who is the God of the living, has spoken his life-giving word to answer that question which is the world (John 10:10 with

1 Cor. 1:20 and Hebrews 1:1-4). Jesus who dies no more (Rom. 6:8-11) is the horizon of the world. Jesus, raised from the dead as the firstborn of many brothers (1 Cor. 15:20), is not an excuse for the toleration of evil in the world. It is rather a challenge to all those who believe in Jesus to overcome evil purely and simply just as Jesus did. Although there can be a cheap resurrection-faith, just as there can be cheap grace, that is not necessarily the true Christian understanding. In fact, it is clearly not. Christianity need not be—is not and cannot be a “Pie in the sky” religion.

If the alienation of death has been overcome, then all other alienation is also intolerable. This is the true faith of the Christian. He is not merely a humanist. He is a humanist plus, because for the Christian believer resurrection-faith enables not only the overcoming of this or that evil but of all evil, even the evil of death.

It is in this context that the Roman Catholic practice of the saints in general or such a doctrine as the Assumption of Mary must be understood. These are the symbols, the expressions of the Christian belief that evil-sin-death-destruction are not the final and ultimate dimensions of our universe. Life and wholeness are, for the world in which we live—and indeed sin and die—remains the gift which has been given to us by God.

By virtue of this resurrection-faith, the Christian has certain advantages over other people who are also working for the good of mankind. The promise of the ultimate victory gives the Christian a certain consolation and encouragement for he realizes that he is not isolated in his own feeble resources. His resurrection-faith enables him to avoid



the nihilism of certain so-called humanists for whom death is normal, and the only resolution of this fundamentally unhappy existence. For them death is the natural outcome and purpose of human existence. The Christian is also able to avoid the melancholy of, let us say, a Corliss Lamont for whom death can only be accepted bravely, stoically. But after all the rhetoric in which Lamontian humanism actually happens, death still has the last word. The Christian is also able to avoid that unhealthy attitude advocated by Eric Fromm, whereby death is simply not to be thought of. That can hardly be healthy. It certainly does not indicate a vigorous, robust, basically optimistic enjoyment and accomplishment of one's life.

Furthermore, the resurrection-faith of the Christian enables him to avoid that last impasse that Marxist communism, for example, cannot avoid, namely death. Inspired by the Kierkegaardian Christianity wherein one believes because it is absurd, a contemporary Marxist theoretician has said that he does not believe in God although it is absurd (V. Gardavski, *Gott ist nicht ganz tot*). The absurdity of such non-belief is most clearly manifested in two inevitable human failures to which even Marxist faith and practice must eventually succumb. One is clearly unavoidable—the individual person's own death. The other has been equally inconsistent, at least until the present, namely the normal failure of society to reform itself and to produce the good life for all its members. In the face of this, Marxist reform as well as Sartrean freedom is, in a sense, condemned to failure. The Christian always has the hope that there will indeed be wholeness of life, that his efforts and those of all men

in the whole world do not end in the darkness and destruction of death.

Karl Rahner also develops the idea that the Christian, because of his resurrection-faith, can be somewhat more relaxed in his social reform work. He is convinced that he is not all alone and that he has been promised the accompaniment of Jesus until the end of the world (Matt. 28:20). The spirit of truth is at work in the world, but not the deceitful spirit of death (John 14:16). What is impossible for man is not impossible with God (Mark 10:27). Therefore the Christian is spared a certain sense of desperation and enabled to concentrate more fully and integrally on the task of reforming the world. That Christians have been so lax in this respect is to be attributed to their misunderstanding and to their own lethargy. But it is not to be accepted as the proper interpretation of the Christian's belief. That he remains a sinful believer is clearly the teaching of the New Testament and of basic Christian tradition down through the ages.

The Christian is not proud or complacent because of his resurrection-faith in Jesus. He is not indifferent to the presence of evil, sin and death, nor tolerant thereof. In fact, precisely the presence of evil, sin, and death means that the Christian has not responded adequately to Christ's proclamation of the reign of God. So the Kingdom as such is still out-standing. Therefore, the Christian, not just as a social-ist or a human-ist, but precisely as believer, precisely as Christian, is obliged to work for the elimination of evil from the world. Far from causing the alienation of man, the Christian's resurrection belief precisely enables man to battle unceasingly against evil and to do so

without growing tired (Rom. 12:11). As Jesus said, he has the power to lay down his life and to take it up again (John 10:18). And he has shared that power with his people so that they who are proud to bear the name Christian must also be involved as Jesus was in driving out evil spirits, in healing the sick, in preaching the Good News to the poor.

This is the faith of the Christian and this is why the Christian sings Alleluia, especially during Eastertide. In the death-resurrection of Jesus has been re-

vealed that God is neither the rival nor the oppressor of man—his alienation. He is rather the possibility that man exists at all. And in this death-resurrection of Jesus has been revealed that God's gifts are not frugal but superabundant, so that even though he die, man shall live (John 11:25). As the ground of any possible political theology, the resurrection-faith of Easter makes it possible and obligatory for man to engage in social reform for the good of all men, "to make us praise the glory of his grace" (Eph. 1:6). ALLELUIA!

## A City-Dweller's Prayer

O God of every time and place,  
    prevail among us too;  
Within the city that we love  
    its promise to renew.  
Our people move with downcast eyes,  
    tight, sullen and afraid;  
Surprise us with Thy joy divine  
    for we would be remade.

O Thou whose will we can resist,  
    but cannot overcome,  
Forgive our harsh and strident ways,  
    the harm that we have done.  
Like Babel's builders long ago  
    we raise our lofty towers,  
And like them, too, our words divide,  
    and pride lays waste our powers.

Behind the masks that we maintain  
    to shut our sadness in,  
There lurks the hope, however dim,  
    to live once more as men.  
Let wrong embolden us to fight,  
    and need excite our care;  
If not us, who? If not now, when?  
    If not here, God, then where?

Our fathers stayed their minds on Thee  
    in village, farm and plain;  
Help us, their crowded, harried kin,  
    no less Thy peace to claim.  
Give us to know that Thou dost love  
    each soul that Thou has made;  
That size does not diminish grace,  
    nor concrete hide Thy gaze.

Grant us, O God, who labor here  
    within this throbbing maze,  
A forward-looking, saving hope  
    to galvanize our days.  
Let Christ, who loved Jerusalem,  
    and wept its sins to mourn,  
Make just our laws and pure our hearts;  
    so shall we be reborn! Amen.

(Hymn written by the Rev. Ernest T. Campbell, D.D., minister of the Riverside Church, New York City. It was sung by the choir and congregation on September 26, 1971, to the tune *All Saints New* by Henry S. Cutler.)

## The Word God Sent

"In the beginning was the Word."  
But shuffling, thumb-noise knowledge,  
Heedless truth,  
Unpersoned language,  
Neat stained upon white sheets,  
Indifferent leaves,  
Symbols writ in man's own image,  
Silent, self-contained and self-concerned  
Thrown back upon themselves in endless loops  
Cut off the world of sense and sight and mind,  
From mystery and myth.  
Imagination stalled.  
ABC encoded all.  
Two plus two became a faith, and man a fact.  
So, shrunk from what he could not see or hear,  
Impaled upon himself  
He died to God.

"And the Word became flesh."  
Dwelt among cold calculations,  
Battling minds that figured all there was and all there was to be,  
Declaring thought the servant, not the master of the race,  
Crossing possible to probable with upstart beam of what if and could be.  
Crucified by men reduced, predictable, aghast,  
Crying out, forgiving, slumped in death,  
There hung the Word uncomfortably stretched in human form,  
And poet sense declared, "Behold the man."

"And we have beheld his glory,"  
Glory as of God's-own-Son-man,  
Unpresuming, unassuming,  
And in stature, indiscernible by rod,  
Gracing sanctuary song and sawmill,  
Leper, legion, leader, lucky,  
Marriage feast and family strife  
With all of hope belief in love can bring.  
Dissatisfied, he leaves us,  
Only Spirit marks to guide us  
To expanse of knowing awe and daring do.

(Poem written by the Rev. Charles L. Bartow, Ph.D., former instructor in speech,  
Princeton Theological Seminary.)



# The Nature of Human Nature

by W. NORMAN PITTENGER

Nor long ago, a long train trip from London to a city in northern Scotland gave me the opportunity to read Larens van der Post's fascinating book *The Heart of the Hunter*. In this book the author writes about the few surviving Bushmen (he calls them survivors of "stone-age culture") who live in the South African desert of the Kalahari. In one chapter van der Post reports a number of "stories," as he calls them, in which this primitive people convey their deepest beliefs; and after summarizing the main points of these stories he writes as follows: "There is a constant emphasis [in them] upon life conceived not merely as *being* but also as unending becoming. Here we find recognition of the fact that it is the element of becoming in the center of his being that gives man's life its quality and meaning. The ancient paradox is asserted, in the lives of insect, reptile, animal, rainbow, sun, moon, and star, that he who lives his life merely to *be* loses it; he who loses his life in order to become lives forever."

As I read these words, and the "stories" which are given as examples, I was struck by the fact that these primitive Bushmen had already grasped a truth which we in the civilized world, after centuries of stress on "being," are now beginning to understand. The Bushmen

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saw that the "element of becoming" is the distinctive "quality" of human existence; and he related that quality to the cosmos (hence the reference by van der Post to "rainbow, sun, moon, and star") as well as to the animal world ("insect, reptile, animal"). "Unending becoming" is at the heart of "being," the Bushmen believed; and in his naive way he told his "stories" to demonstrate this truth.

As it happened, I had been working on the problem of man's nature, reading as much as I could in books by scientific experts in various fields as well as by philosophers and theologians. With my belief that a processive metaphysic, in the style of Alfred North Whitehead, is our best "vision of reality," I found that the material I was studying fitted in admirably. And here were primitive people in South Africa who through their long and tragic history had insistently maintained an essentially "processive" view, both of man and the world. The correspondence was striking, to say the least.

In this essay I wish to pick up some of these ideas and use them to illuminate what we are saying when we speak of human nature as dynamic and in process. For we are coming to recognize that to speak of man *is* to speak of a dynamic process which makes nonsense

of all attempts to "fix" him in static categories. From every side we learn more about this living creature who is ourselves; and increasingly we recognize that interpretations of human existence in terms of concepts like substance (or even, in one sense, "nature"—a word, however, which it seems we must use for want of a better one) resemble morphological descriptions of a butterfly, dead and pinned on a card in a museum—the living, fluttering, tremulant creature is forgotten and for it is substituted a dead, inert, still remainder.

In the "feel" of our concrete existence, we know very well that we are not "fixed" objects but living, conscious, and desiring subjects, who exist from our past, in our present, and towards our future. Man is a dynamic structure of becoming; his "being," which signifies his identity as this or that particular "routing" or direction taken by experiences and happenings, is found precisely in the linkage of the occasions of his becoming, not apart from them and in principle separable from them. From his past man inherits the stuff and equipment with which he may work in the present, while his effort is directed towards a future fulfillment, however dimly this may be grasped and comprehended. Central to his experienced "routing" is his goal of self-actualization—his "subjective aim," in Whiteheadian language.

Of course we can (if we wish) offer formal definitions of man. We can speak with Thomas Aquinas (who here followed Boethius) of "an individual substance of a rational nature." There are many other possible definitions. But the difficulty we find in them is that they miss that quality of "becoming" to

which van der Post rightly referred. Furthermore, they are abstract and universally applicable; hence they miss also the *personal* feeling of human existence which leads us to use the pronoun "I." Nor do they include the inescapable relationship which man sustains with others of his kind, to whom we are similar but from whom we "stand out" in our particularity. The compound personal-social character of human existence is well-known to each man as he concretely lives his life; and it is associated with the movement of "becoming" and his forward-thrust towards fulfillment of potentiality. It is part of his movement towards the achievement of selfhood.

Contemporary enquiries and research in many fields help us here. The "dynamic psychologists" tell of the developmental drive in human personality, where the stuff of which we are made is employed for the achievement of goals. The "gestalt" school stresses the organic or patterned character of human activity, with integration of self discovered in purposive activity. The "depth psychologists," despite the differences among them in approach and description, agree that human personality is inclusive of its whole past (conscious and unconscious) but is essentially directive, since fulfillment striven for brings whatever unity is possible for the self. In other branches of modern thought much the same is said. The existential analysis of the human situation emphasizes the individual (person would have been a better word to use, one may think), with his overcoming the threat to his existence by engaging himself with some cause, objective, or person who gives significance to life. It speaks of the inescapable insecurity and

fragmentariness of man's situation in a world into which he is "thrown" with death as his certain end; to face these facts and yet in the engagement just mentioned to find purpose, is the way to achieving authenticity. We might also mention as relevant the findings of cultural psychology and sociology, showing the social quality of human experience and thought; not to speak of the increasingly clear insistence, from ecologists, on human dependence on environment in a wider sense—the material or physical world. From practically every contemporary discipline we are given the strongest insistence on the "becoming" of man, his social belonging, his processive quality, and the organic nature of his existence. The Bushmen saw this in their unsophisticated way; we now see it demonstrated.

A Christian will add something here. For he knows, or should know, that in many ways the biblical portrayal of man coincides with this view. Made of the dust of the earth, upon which "spirit" has been breathed, man lives with his human brethren in a "bundle of life," moving forward through his history to become what God purposes him to become. He is dependent upon nature, where God is also at work; his whole existence as man is in his relationships with others, with the world, and with God. His identity as man is not given in some abstract "selfhood," known in isolation; it is given because God *names* him, *calls* him, *seeks to use* him as instrumental in a social context for the divine purpose. He is this or that particular man because in his dynamic existence he is an identifiable "routing" (to use a very non-biblical term which we have used before) who is being cre-

ated by God through his own decisions as a responsible creature.

Our purpose here, however, is neither to catalogue the contribution from modern science and philosophy, nor to show its similarity to the biblical portrayal. Rather, we wish to see what can be said today about human nature. Thus in the remainder of this essay we shall consider several points that seem important about man, without a repeated reference to Christian ideas—although the essay is written out of Christian conviction quite as much as, indeed very more than, in reliance upon the insights of the process of conceptuality to which the writer subscribes. At the end, a few comments will be made about human responsibility and its significance when seen in this context.

Before we proceed it is necessary to make clear that this essay assumes, although it does not argue for, a theistic view of the world. But we shall not fall into the easy mistake of "introducing God" as a stop-gap explanation. We have learned from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the secular theologians (so-called), and others that God is not obviously and intrusively present in the affairs of his creation. He is present there in the deep sense of the significance of our existence, as Schubert Ogden has well argued in *The Reality of God*. He is present as the provider of the "initial aims," continuing lures, and final recipient for each entity and its achievement. He is the chief causative agent but not the only one nor the visibly recognizable one; he is the supreme affective reality as he draws creatures to himself and accepts what they do towards the good. By *some* he is consciously apprehended as the companion who provides his creatures with a sense of fellow-feeling

in their joys and sorrows as well as in their decisions and actions. In specifically Christian faith, God is known as the cosmic Love who in Jesus Christ was both disclosed and shared; hence as Christians we must include in our presuppositions about the nature of man that "Love is the only survival, the only meaning," to use the striking words with which Thornton Wilder concluded his novel, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*.

Our discussion will proceed by considering the following: (1) the stuff of which human existence is made; (2) the movement towards selfhood through relationship to what is not that self; (3) the goal or aim which establishes selfhood; (4) relationships in the deeper sense as grounded in the basic reality of the cosmos where man's existence happens; (5) the place of human decision and freedom; (6) the organic quality of man's life, with special stress on desire or yearning. Other points might have been cited but it seems that these are especially relevant; and if we are to conclude with comments on human responsibility they are of great importance.

### I.

We turn first to what we have styled the stuff of which human existence is made. In the obvious sense this is material stuff, "of the earth earthy." It includes the body of flesh and blood, with its physical, chemical, and biological levels. To say this is not to succumb to naturalistic material, as some might think. It is only to recognize the truth in the biblical verse already cited: we are "of the dust of the earth," although "spirit" has animated this dust.

There is seemingly inveterate tendency among religiously-minded people

to take a too spiritual view of man. Jacques Maritain, presumably thinking of the medieval definition of an angel as "an incorporeal spiritual substance," styled this fallacy "angelism." The fact is that the stuff of humanity is the stuff of the earth, patterned in a complex way to bring about the emergence of awareness, rationality, intentional willing, and desire. Anything we say about human nature must be said on that basis. The patterning of which we spoke is highly complicated and its precise details are not yet known to us; but there is nothing unlikely or frightening in the possibility of "synthesizing living matter." On the other hand, man's stuff is not *just* this highly complex physical organism; it includes those qualities of rationality, volition, feeling without which we are not specifically human at all.

What has just been suggested may be sufficiently clear to everybody these days, but occasionally the obvious needs statement. Nor can we forget the danger that if religiously-minded people commit the fallacy of "angelism" others may commit the equally serious mistake of seeing man only as another animal. The truth is that man is a strangely "holistic" creature; and in his wholeness as man he is "organic to the universe," as Pringle-Pattison said many years ago. He is not an intruder into nature from some realm of pure spirit, neither is he only a sophisticated simian.

### 2.

There is the movement towards selfhood, through relationship to what is not the self. Anyone who has watched a baby grow in self-awareness understands what is suggested here. The contrast which the infant experiences between his inchoate sense of self and the



environment, beginning with mother and father, then including other persons and things which he sees and feels around him, awakens an ever more precise consciousness of himself. The development is a complex series of acceptances and rejections, failures and successes, recognitions and feeling of inability to recognize, with an equally vivid growth in understanding the intractability of what is not self. This may stand as a paradigm for the way in which relationship is built into the dynamic structure of personality at its earliest stage. As relationship deepens and expands, so the self-awareness of each person becomes more adequate and satisfying. Under our fourth heading we shall say more about this, and with a wider application.

At the moment we would only observe that to grow in selfhood is at the same time to grow in relationship with others; the reverse is also true, unless there is some pathological distortion or twisting which prevents the normal course of events. The attempt to deny this inter-action or inter-penetration of self with others can lead only to a narrowing of the personality and a deviation from its proper fulfillment. The truth of this observation is amply demonstrated when we contemplate an entirely "self-centered" man who tries to exist (he can hardly be said to *live*) as if others did not count. He cannot really accomplish this, so deep is sociality in human nature; but the attempt is damaging to his personal growth and produces a warped and stunted self. It also leads to a terrible inner loneliness which now and again expresses itself in tragic ways. For man is made to be "with the brethren"; when he cannot or will not actualize this intentionality in his na-

ture, he is much less than fully human, much less than a true self.

## 3.

Process thought affirms that every actual entity or energy-event possesses a subjective aim towards the realization of which it strives and in attaining which it achieves its specific kind of "satisfaction." In a quite different idiom, Jean-Paul Sartre has spoken of the *pour-soi* which a man must project as he "engages himself" with whatever he feels will deliver him from mere mass-manhood, the *en-soi*. In both types of thought, as well as among the psychologists who tell us about goals and who have found that human energy is essentially directional, we see an emphasis on a quality in human life which our own introspection shows to be very real. The intensity of our conscious awareness of this directional quality, as of the aim or goal in view, varies enormously. Doubtless with most of us most of the time it is very dim, although there are moments when we have a keen sense of our direction and our aim. But whether we have such moments or not, the striving for such actualization is integral to personality.

In words used earlier, man aims at becoming human. His final and all-inclusive purpose is to integrate into some genuine unity all that is in him, including the basic stuff of which he is made, so that he can function in a fashion that will bring him happiness. In his own way, Aristotle saw this; his treatment of the matter was spoiled, we may venture to say, by the metaphysical context in which he placed it. Happiness—or satisfaction: these words may be misunderstood. The meaning here is not gloating self-content or superficial "good

feelings," but the deep sense of well-being which is known when every part of the personality is being used in a fashion that positively fulfills.

## 4.

But this cannot take place in isolation. Here we return to the question of relationship. Some sharing with others in the seeking of the goal is required. The old English saying about "goodness in widest commonalty shared" is to the point here. No genuinely fulfilling striving for such goodness, which actualizes natural and human possibility, is possible save in openness to, participation with, and delight in both giving and receiving from others. We are knit together as men; and individualism is not only an evil in itself (for it denies our sociality) but is utterly self-defeating in the long run.

Relationship, then, is to a very considerable degree constitutive of each self—although the remembered past can never be dismissed. This does not imply that the self *as self* is unimportant; it demands only that we recognize that our selfhood is *with* other selves. Perhaps something of this truth is intimated when van der Post speaks about the man who "lives merely to be" and thus "loses his life." Why is this? Surely because this kind of man, in trying "to be," is unaware of the relationships in which he must stand. On the other hand, the man "who loses his being in order to become," to continue from van der Post, loses himself in and for others—and hence finds himself. Jesus had a word here, let us remember. Furthermore, in dying to one's former self, "losing it" in still another sense, new possibilities for the future self are opened—and once again, in relation-

ship with others who are there to give and to receive.

Participation in the life of the race is so integral to manhood that it ought to be included in any definitions we offer. What we may appropriately call human sociality is as much part of a man's existence as his biology or rationality. Nor is this relatedness confined only to the immediately contemporary members of the race, although naturally they are most obviously typical of it. Such relationship is inclusive of the racial past which is "remembered" in most diverse ways in succeeding generations as it moulds them for what they may become, with the relevant possibilities available to them. It is inclusive of the future of the race as well. The aim which men possess severally makes its contribution to that future, for good or for ill. Part of our human directionality is in preparing for that future, whether we know it or not; responsible preparation, with sufficiently long-range views, is an obligation that no thoughtful man will wish to evade.

## 5.

We come now to the role of decision in human life; and with it to the freedom which men feel to be theirs.

A man may say "Yes" or "No" to possibilities presented to him. If he says "No" to possibilities for widely shared good, he is opting for a narrowed selfhood. If he says "Yes" to them, he is choosing a wider and widening selfhood. In any event, either by acceptance or by rejection he is determining how his becoming will proceed. The word "decision" is derived from Latin; its root meaning is "cutting off." When we decide for *this* we "cut off" the possibility of *that*. At the same time, to

indulge in innocent word-play, we "cut into" the possibility that has in fact been selected. The word "cutting into," while hardly immediately correct in an etymological sense, is useful because it indicates that the choice of *this* possibility entails other, more long-range possibilities which are its consequences. This is a way of saying that no decision is momentary and disjunctive, but carries with it results which are inescapable and relationships which are tied up with it.

The human experience of decision is grounded in the wider cosmic reality of decision. I am not suggesting that an electron "decides" in the same way in which I decide. But I should wish to suggest that throughout the creation, something analogous is going on—if only in that the movement of the creation occurs precisely because certain selections are made, whether for further advance or for failure to proceed. Such selection is not consciously made, of course, at levels below self-awareness; that does not mean that they fail to take place. The history of the creation is the story of such selections, all the way through. My point here is that human decision is not a complete anomaly; it is a peculiarly vivid, conscious, and human instance of something that may be generalized.

Much the same may be said about the related fact of freedom. Since in our conceptuality God is not seen as a tyrannical dictator, but as primarily persuasion and lure, there is an element of freedom everywhere in the creation. In man this comes vividly to a point. Despite the sophisticated effort of some thinkers to deny such freedom, it is interesting that they themselves presuppose it in their every action and argu-

ment. Here is the truth which Bishop Butler saw when he remarked in *The Analogy of Religion* that since we all act on this assumption of freedom, it is far simpler to grant that it really exists. Of course the extent of freedom, in any given instance, is limited by the circumstances, social conditions, the stuff of which we are made, our previous selections, and much else. But to recognize this limitation is very far from denying the fact of the freedom which is limited.

Nicolas Berdyaev once described man as "created freedom." Both words are important. *Freedom* is important for the reasons just noted: it has to do with human capacity for significant decisions which contribute, one way or another, to the creative advance. *Created* is important since man is finite, limited, and always tempted for this reason (as well as because of the accumulated "wrong" in his racial past which makes choice for good difficult) to select less than the best at any given moment. Man's freedom is not identical with sin, but it is the ground of the possibility of sin. In other words, freedom to make significant decision establishes a situation for the mistaken or narrow or self-centered choices which distort the ongoing movement of the creative process, including man's own "routing" in it. Then continuing situations are brought about in which the right choices are ever more hard to make. To decide wrongly, in this context (whether keenly aware of the "wrong" or not), damages the one who thus decides; it damages his fellowmen with whom he is in unfailing relationship; and it thwarts the purpose of the whole enterprise—God in his loving activity in the world, working always for the best good of every occasion. Thus a situation is created with



which God must wrestle and to overcome which his love must find new ways of acting. But that is a different subject from the present one, although it is highly relevant to it.

## 6.

Finally we come to the organic quality of human life, with special stress upon desire or yearning within it.

We have already said much, in an indirect way, about this organic quality. Here we need only repeat that man is compounded of the dust of the earth; yet he is also possessed of the capacity for thought, with awareness and self-awareness, he consciously strives for goals, he is open to relationships which are not simply there but are *known* to be there. He can appreciate and value things and persons as good or bad; he can espouse causes that are worthy or unworthy. Above all, he desires and yearns for that which will bring him deepest satisfaction. These are end-products, produced through a long history upon the basis of the material stuff of man. They are distinctive of him, so far as we know. The whole is held together in an organism in which each affects the rest: he is a "body with many members," each one of which has its function on behalf of the whole while the whole is operative through each.

In reaction from various portrayals of man which were partial and hence untrue in context, as well as because of modern scientific study and phenomenological enquiry, we are prepared today to speak of man in this organic fashion—and to do so with considerable confidence. More and more people are talking about "the whole man"; they are correct in doing so, just as they are right in seeing that he must be treated as be-

ing exactly such a whole. Yet if there is anything which may be said to serve as a focal centre for this organic quality, it is (I believe) man's desire or yearning. In an earlier day man's rationality was stressed as the centre. There can be no doubt of the enormous importance of his rationality, such as it is; but it has often been over-emphasized at the expense of what I have called his desire or yearning—by which I mean the capacity to love, to give himself in love, and to *want* to do this. It is obvious that to stress desire, yearning—love—can be dangerous; these can go wrong with disastrous results. That is why St. Augustine, who more than most saw the truth I am now trying to assert, said that man's basic need is the "right ordering" of his loving. Proper integration of the whole man cannot be achieved apart from a proper patterning of what a Prayer Book collect calls "desires and affections." These desires and affections, upon which we set our heart, are the means by which we are drawn to the right or the wrong fulfillment of our human aim. Thus we require rationality to help "get our priorities right" in respect to the various possible choices we make. We need also a passionate quality in our desiring, since without this there will not be the all-demanding and all-commanding pursuit of aim. And the "ordering," of which St. Augustine spoke, delivers us from getting lost in a *mélange* of emotionalism.

Yet it is in his loving that man comes to his full stature. His process of becoming, which constitutes what we style his "being," is capable of realization in a fully and truly human way only when he can and does love that which is worthy of his love and when he is ready



to receive love as it comes to him from others. Or, in the simplest words, man is being created to become a lover—a created lover, who will be both the reflection of and the instrument for the divine Love. That is his vocation as man.

\* \* \* \*

The picture of man which I have sought to present is something like this. Man is a process of becoming towards fulfillment of potentiality; in this he is like everything else in the creation. Made of the stuff of the earth, he has emerged in such a way that he has distinctive human qualities. He is aware of himself and of others and with those others he is intended to move towards a goal which will be satisfying to him and to them. In his relationships he discovers his selfhood, for these relationships are largely constitutive of him. He makes decisions, in relative freedom, towards the achievement of his goal; and he is being made in terms of such decisions. He is intended to become a lover, who in giving himself will find himself, in sharing will receive, and in mutuality will know genuine joy.

As a Christian I can accept this picture, although I must add something. I must add the disclosure of God in Jesus Christ; the "saving" offered there from the inhibiting past with its mistakes, distortions, and twistings; the new opening to men of a life lived *in* "the love of God which was in Christ Jesus"; and much else. To speak of these with appropriate seriousness and at length goes beyond the objective set for ourselves in this essay. But I am convinced that the picture I have presented is true as far as it goes and that the deliverances and assurances of Christian faith do contra-

dict it but rather, fill it out and complete it.

I turn for my final comments on human response and human responsibility, which (as I see it) are very intimately related one with the other.

Response here is taken to signify man's "answering back," negatively or positively to all that makes its impact upon him, overtly or subtly and invisibly. Because he lives in his relationships, with others, with the natural order, and with God, such response is unavoidable. The question is the sort of response which is made; how inclusive of the whole self it is; how wide in its grasp and how deep in its reach into his inner heart. A man may respond by saying "No" and trying to run away from his God-given aim; he may refuse to accept others gladly; he may treat nature as a thing to be exploited rather than something to be used for the widest good. On the other hand, when he says "Yes" to the right possibilities (which entails his saying "No" to the wrong ones), he may suffer anguish and yet have some sense of overarching joy in fulfillment. Response is always made; and it is being made at a particular place and in a particular moment—for there is no other place or time in which it can be made than those in which he now finds himself.

Having made response, negatively or positively, there is still a further question for man. Will he take upon himself both the good and the bad consequences of his decisions? Will he feel the obligation to do this? Will he not only make response, as he must, but will he also *be responsible*?

W. H. Auden, in *Letters from Iceland*, urged his readers "to take upon themselves the guilt of human action."

That is a fine phrase. But perhaps it would have been better, because more inclusive, to have spoken of the demand that men accept what human action entails, for good *or* for ill. Any of us can try to run away from this demand. When he does so, he succeeds only in compounding his failures and rejecting the furtherance of that "unending becoming" towards significant existence about which van der Post wrote. On the other hand, he may responsibly choose to "lose his being" so that he may "live forever." I do not know whether van der Post would agree with my interpretation of that last phrase; but I suggest that for us it can mean something like this. To move on in "becoming,"

to respond with human responsibility to new occasions, to die to the old self that the new self may emerge with its greater possibilities of loving, is *the way of life*. Christian faith affirms this but with a difference; for the "way of life" is God's action in Jesus who thus *is* "the Way: which is the truth and the life." If all that is worthy lives forever in God's life—in his "consequent nature," as a process thinker must say—the man who rejects the temptation to stay "fixed" and who with his brethren moves forward responsibly towards his fulfillment in God is one who shares in what the Johannine writer called "eternal life."

# The Synthesizing Potential of Religion

by EDWARD J. JURJI

*During the 1971 Princeton Conference on World Religions, October 19-20, one of the papers was given by Edward J. Jurji, Professor of the History of Religions. An alumnus of the American University at Beirut, Princeton University (Ph.D.), and Princeton Theological Seminary (Th.B.), Dr. Jurji is the author of a number of books, including The Phenomenology of Religion (Westminster, 1963).*

SEVERAL weeks have now elapsed since my sojourn in Morocco's time-washed cultural capital Fez. A vivid recollection remains of the old city's winding alleys as I followed their course around the historic Mosque of al-Qarawiyyin, one of Islam's great centers of worship and learning. Just a few days later, I visited Granada, Spain's lovely garden city. In its celebrated al-Hambra palace, I read a recurrent inscription. *La ghaliba illa Allah*, "There is no conqueror save God," it said in words defying the ravages of time.

It was then that history took over to insert the needed background story. It recounted that after the reconquest of Granada in 1492, Hispano-Arab art became a specialty—certainly by the sixteenth century—of al-Maghrib, the so-called "far west" of the Arab world. For consequent upon the victorious thrust of Renaissance art in Iberia, the medieval Andalusian versatility in architecture and decorative craftsmanship passed on to Fez where today a remarkable continuity of Islamic culture persists.

Whether we happen to be in Spain or North Africa, we discover a religious synthesis. It is exercised by Christianity and Islam. It exhibits itself as it were in an open air museum. These two great religions stand apart each in theory at least claiming a self-sufficiency and identity of its own. However, on

every hand they confront one another, coalesce, and interact. In art and the realm of mysticism, no less than in politics and theology, adherents of the two world faiths implicitly serve notice that no religious society can long endure in total isolation. Neither persons nor communities thrive in a total vacuum. In Morocco, my wife noted, and I agreed, the people are fully aware of their role in the modern world for as she phrased it, "they are in touch."

Such a synthesizing potential of religion and culture is a world-wide though strangely unheralded phenomenon. Since it belongs to the nature of things, such a synthesizing faculty is evidently here to stay. We do not really know. We may attempt a tentative definition of what takes place: Insofar as man's encounters in nature are concerned, there seems to be a synthesizing potential of religion translating creeds into reforming actions and redeeming faith into restorative healing grace in a historic setting of flesh and blood where experience in depth triumphs through challenge and response. We are not dealing here with the dead end of abstract faith but with the visible and transparent transactions of daily life where mansions of concrete reality are ever building and where bridges span alienation in interpersonal and community relations.

The kind of faith I am talking about

is directed to divine ultimacy, addressed as God or by some other metaphor. Ingmar Bergmann's film *The Silence* introduces Ester as leading lady. She is harrowed by fits of coughing triggered by a mortal illness. The narrative is geared to human suffering and the silence of God. The silence of the cosmos vis-à-vis the protracted death throes of an actress—is that the voice of the Holy? Hardly. The script implies that the voice of the sufferer somehow is identical with the voice of God. If so, a synthesizing potential of theological magnitude is inevitably touched in life's strain and stress. More specifically, a synthesizing power is manifest in the postures of self. It is palpable in the attitudes of personality no less than in the drama articulate through community.

Presumably we all know, Sigmund Freud would have none of it. We hear few words of approval in his critique of religion for any such notion as that of a synthesizing potential. Quite the contrary, he argued that earthquakes, floods, and fires do not differentiate between the good and bad men, the sinner and believer. Indeed, they do not. However, our response is that everything we are or expect to be can be hypostatized under two norms: (a) what we accomplish on our own; (b) what happens to us beyond our initiatives and calculations. The curious thing about our earthly pilgrimage nevertheless is that things achieved and those that befall us are remarkably interwoven in a single package of undifferentiated awareness.

A critical focus of the synthesizing vitality apparently arises in the psyche. Teilhard de Chardin observed that the psychical makeup of an insect is not

that of a vertebrate. It is only in the human line, he noted, that the operation reaches the stage of reflection. The story of man begins to unfold as he stands in the proximity of intelligence and attains potentialities of vision and release from bondage.

Beyond the psyche in its infancy, the focus of encounter with nature shifts to the orbit of personality and the contours of community. Try as we may, we'll never truly distinguish a person from his nature or power—so runs a Hindu saying. I culled this allusion to personality from the Bhagavad Gita (9:8-10):

"Limited by the power of my own power (Lord Krishna to Arjuna) and compelled by my nature I create again and again these conglomerations of elements. Ruled by my law, the power of nature gives birth to the animate and inanimate worlds."

Thus Alain Daniélou's translation. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan sounds more exegetical: "Taking hold of nature which is my own, I send forth again and again all this multitude of beings which are helpless, being under the control of nature (*prakṛti*). Nor do these works bind me, O winner of wealth (Arjuna), for I am seated as if indifferent, unattached in those actions."

Call it as you will—allegory or myth. We are well advised not to take Martin Buber literally or rationally when he avers: "I become through my relation to the *Thou*; as I become I, I say *Thou*." "We only need look at a man," explained Paul Tournier, "to see how inconsistent his personality is when he has no living faith, how he is at the mercy of every wind that blows."

As for the city, we discover here a still different pattern of the synthesizing



potential. Increasingly, our species is bound to gravitate from peasantry toward urbanity as once it turned from hunting to cattle breeding and sedentary occupations. The city in fact serves as an ecological harbinger of heaven on earth. I stand by this statement despite the crime and pollution, congestion and financial straits so frequently discussed by Mayor John V. Lindsay. The Bible opens with a garden but closes with a New Jerusalem, a holy city prepared like a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:12). Did not Abraham by faith sojourn in the land of promise for he looked forward to the city whose builder and maker is God (Heb. 11:9-10)?

Of one thing there is evidently little doubt. What genuine synthesizing potential of religion there is will only partially reveal itself to our inquiring minds. As a child of nature, however, man does enjoy an inborn freedom, a capacity to rethink the nature of his self-identity. Surely the divine image stamped upon a creaturely form symbolizes quest for a breakthrough as he begins more fully to understand that the city is the world.

In order to afford us greater clarity, I propose now to open several windows. Conceivably, these might enlarge the area of vision and explain whether or not the broad definition cited above is endorsed by the hard realities of the modern world.

# I

Sooner or later we begin to find out that modern science seeks nothing less than to establish a physical basis of life. It is the old Promethean urge all over again—an urge no longer a mere dream. I do not deprecate such a move. John

Desmond Bernal, the outstanding British historian of science who died recently, refused to see a real problem in such areas of international concern as that of population growth and explosion. He was inclined to rely on the power of science to provide sufficient food. But any grand strategy in this field based on the fond aspiration that science single-handedly can integrate mankind's shattered loyalties simply does not seem to work.

Another flaw in the modern scientific prognosis is that unhappily it tends to pay lip service to man's scientific odyssey across the millennia. George Sarton, famed Harvard historian of science, once referred to the advance effected by Hellenistic science and culture during the epoch of the last three pre-Christian centuries. His lament was that we had not done as well in the three centuries since the *Mayflower* sailed from England in 1620 bringing the Pilgrim Fathers to our shores.

Behind today's science and ethics lies the giant stride of the ancients, particularly the Greeks and Hebrews. Apart from the other legacies—those of ancient Egypt, Rome, Babylon, and Persia—modern science might not be what it is. Its pioneers arose in China, India, Phoenicia, and Sumer. The two major events of late ancient times are the Teutonic migrations that disrupted the venerable Roman empire and the Arab conquests which demolished the Persian empire and shook the Byzantine power to its foundations. Knowledge owes the medieval Arabs a heavy debt not just for their mediatorial role as transmitters of culture including science and the humanities, but also for their enthusiasm, ingenuity, and curiosity on the

several frontiers of exploration, experimentation, and discovery.

True, religious beliefs have not been developed and are not verifiable by the scientific method alone. Natural scientists such as Julian Huxley and philosophers such as John Dewey have therefore rejected belief in God as a survival of prescientific thinking. Nonetheless, the cardinal conception of man in the West is a product of the synthesis of classical humanism and Hebrew theism.

Modern philosophy affirms that the mind's highest function is spiritual activity. The spirit is capable of becoming the controlling principal of personality. The thought of Plato and Aristotle on the subject was that the highest part of the soul is reason and that it can subordinate sensation and appetite to the attainment of wisdom and virtue.

In keeping with the Biblical capability to harmonize and synthesize much modern psychology describes the mind in dynamic terms primarily as will and not intellect. In short, the synthesizing potential of religion far from negating the theoretical fundamentals of modern science seeks to comprehend them and to relate what is thus learned to a more comprehensive appreciation of the truth. An optimum spectrum of reality is thus envisaged. Such a format—while avoiding any flair for reduction or absorption—upholds the autonomy and integrity of both faith and reason in conjugal felicity.

## II

In theology and ideology the religious power to synthesize occasionally becomes eroded by exclusiveness and extremism. A dogmatic bent to fit the once delivered "true religion" into a provincial straitjacket has generally out-

lived its usefulness. More persuasive perhaps is an openness to recognize extraordinary truth wherever man's faith has been alive in the entire experience of the race. This should by no means prejudice the sanctity of personal, confessional faith. The doughty saints of the church, for example—Paul, Augustine, Luther, to name only three—were transformed less by an indwelling grace and more by an encounter with redemptive purpose. In the view of John Macquarrie, if one is healthy, general grace will suffice but if he is sick a personal Savior, Jesus Christ, is needed.

In this era of secular orientation, the theology of hope gains momentum thanks to an openness to contemporary cross currents and ideologies. Based in theology, it is a manifestation, nonetheless, of the kind of responsible synthesizing activity under investigation. Jürgen Moltmann, its scholarly advocate, sets forth an exemplary model on the central theme of this article. His point of departure is grounded in biblical theology. The antithesis is Ernst Bloch's *Prinzip Hoffnung* (principle of hope). And the synthesis is a theology of mature judgment and probity. Moltmann advances the view of a Christian eschatology endowed with the necessary resilience and flexibility to absorb this particular Marxist principle of hope. By the same token, he stresses a theology challenged to give a more adequate account of itself on the theme of hope.

Nor ought we close our eyes to such a testimony as that of Father William Johnston. An Irish Catholic priest, Father Johnston, lived over twenty years in Japan in the heart of the Zen country. According to his book, *Christian Zen*, there is a parallel between the two faiths, that is, between Zen enlighten-

ment (*satori*) and Christian *metanoia* (conversion). He rates attainment of enlightenment in the Christian dimension of things at a point where the two Zen experiences of internal meditation (*zazen*) and community (*roshi*) prove meaningful and enriching.

### III

Finally, a glance at the international situation. The temptation of an onslaught by superpower looms large. However, the synthesizing potential of religion affords all mankind a way out of trouble. Such synthesizing is requisite if only because it serves the enterprising purpose of world community. The survival and progress of this country in the coming years do not hinge on military-industrial power alone. A commitment to some sort of messianic manifest destiny has not been too productive. Far more creative—along with restraint in the exercise of naked power—is this synthesizing religious potential of the American people to bind and heal the wounds of the world.

Wedded to America for a good while, I look forward with high expectancy and profound gratitude to our national bicentennial in 1976. To me, America will always be a bride to court and love. This romantic and figurative vein aside, the synthesizing and reconciling character of religion in our country has never failed to inspire and galvanize our land. It has now reached a degree of maturity conducive to willing partnership with those of other faiths and cultures. We have made mistakes. Yet the key watchwords abide—service, fair play, prudence, compassion, courage, as well as enterprise and opportunity, and joy, hope, peace.

In this land of the free, home of the brave, equality of opportunity is a cherished end. Among America's loftiest assets is God's gift of self-forgetful humor. Yet greater than the tread of mighty armies is an idea whose time has come. For us let the idea for today summon us to synthesize in freedom that a better world may arise with power.

# Reason Files A Libel Suit

by JOHN R. BODO

## Lessons:

*Genesis 1:1-10*

*1 Corinthians 14:26-33, 39*

*John 1:1-5, 14-18*

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WE no longer personify virtue in the form of ladies in Roman garb. There is still Lady Justice, blindfolded, ornamenting many courthouses. There is Lady Liberty, torch held high, gracing New York harbor. But I know of no statue representing Lady Reason—and if there were one, it would be demolished, or at least disgustingly defaced, overnight.

Reason's stock is low today. Unreason is on the offensive, reason in flight. In fact, reason is being so grossly maligned in so many quarters that it may be in order—that it may indeed be reasonable—to file a libel suit in her behalf.

## *The Attack on Reason*

The attack on reason, in the name of emotion or freedom, is in evidence on all sides.

In politics, the enemies of reason claim to oppose the system, that is, our present governmental structure. But if you scratch a little, you find opposition not just to this system but to any system—in short, a studied preference for anarchy. The rhetoric is splendid, because it stems from the most part from

understandable, aching grievances. But the notion that a highly industrialized nation of two hundred million could be governed at the grass roots, town meeting style, is absurd.

It is one thing to be impatient with our system of government because, as a child of reason, it is resistant to sudden change. But to advocate, or even wish for, the dismantling of the system in favor of no system, is to invite the vilest dictatorship, the real 1984, which follows upon any experiment in anarchy—invariably and, as a rule, immediately. And revolutions are experiments in anarchy, trampling upon reason, inviting terror. Behind every Kerensky there is a Lenin waiting in the wings; behind every Stresemann, a Hitler.

But the attack on reason is rife in many other areas, too.

In education, for example, reason is said to have a stifling effect upon creativity. Furthermore, according to Marshall McLuhan, reason is no longer even a factor in learning, since children learn everything really important from the tube, through pictures, rather than



from books and reasoned discussion. And this, we are told, is a good thing, a "freeing" thing!

In the area of sex, reason is a kind of dirty word. For reason stands for control which, in this realm, means self-control. It stands for the postponement or denial of satisfaction, because of a rational exploration of the consequences. It stands, in short, against "doing what comes naturally"—against the notion that human beings can frolic like dogs without impairing or destroying their humanity. But today behaving like dogs is supposed to be a mark of the "truly human" life.

The attack on reason has also revolutionized or, I prefer to say, pauperized the arts.

In drama, it is no longer proper to write a "well-made play"—with a beginning, a middle and an end—whether for the stage or for the screen. The brightly lit nightmare world of *Catch 22* is supposed to be the only way things are—and the only way they may be portrayed: not in story form, ever, but as "slices of life"—raw, bleeding, and covered with flies.

In painting, the self-imposed limits of the frame have been challenged. Away with carefully reasoned and painstakingly worked out composition! Finger-painting or squirting from tubes or sloshing from buckets over any surface whatever: that is supposed to be painting fit for our age.

But it is in music that the attack on reason has reached the summit of absurdity. Music is ordered sound. Mere noise becomes music when sound is planned, reasoned, developed according to patterns of pitch, rhythm, and so forth. Thus the very notion of "chance music" is absurd, in the pristine sense

of the word, which is "sense-less." But chance music is being "composed," because there seems to be no end to the flogging of reason and the celebration of chaos!

### *Unreason in the Early Church*

In Chapter XIV of Paul's First Letter to Corinth, we have a unique portrait of chaos in the church—all in the name of freedom and emotion. The Corinthian congregation was composed largely of converts from Eastern and Greco-Roman religions. The services of many of these religions were regular orgies, with frenzied music and dance and, often, sexual license. No wonder that some of these new Christians tried to mould Christian worship into the likeness of the "worship" they knew and enjoyed—a mixture of antique bacchanalia and old-fashioned camp meeting!

If Paul had allowed tongue-speaking to become the norm for the worship of the Church, Christianity would have disappeared along with all the other ecstatic movements and cults of the day. But Paul knew that the new faith had to be built upon the old faith—the Christian faith upon the Jewish—because the God who had appeared in Jesus of Nazareth was the same God who had revealed himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And with this God doctrine and liturgy are paramount. For the God of the Hebrews and now of the Church of Jesus Christ is a "god not of confusion but of peace"—orderly peace!

Paul was not opposed to emotion in religion. In his argument with the Corinthians, he reminds them that he, too, had spoken in tongues, that is, experienced spiritual rapture, and that such rapture had its place. And when

it comes to being for freedom, it was Paul more than anyone else who opened the door to Gentiles, that is, non-Jews, by deciding that Jesus did not expect the burden of the Law of Moses to be placed on the back of every man who would become his disciple.

Yes, Paul was pro-emotion and pro-freedom but he was even more pro-reason. He believed that God wished to be worshipped with the mind as well as with the heart, because he knew that if the mind does not dictate to the heart, the result is a life both mindless and heartless.

And Paul knew that to create a community of Christians who could hold their own in a smart pagan world would require clarity of doctrine and intelligible communication of the doctrine—through the early church's major educational and evangelistic medium—the services of worship. This is why Paul came out swinging against the "Jesus freaks" in Corinth: because, instead of building up the church in the faith and bearing witness to the faith, they were simply "tripping out!"

### *A Rightful Place for Reason*

There was a time, during the Victorian era, when our world—meaning the world of white, well-heeled Western man—seemed too smugly in order, too smugly rational, too blandly unaware of underlying social injustice and spiritual malaise. To inveigh against reason then would have been prophecy, courageous and perceptive. And it is true that, in our churches, there still lingers a certain Victorian aura. We could—we probably should—bend a bit more in the direction of spontaneity, both in our worship and in our church program.

But this is a different world—a world rocked and sobered by two World Wars and the spectre of a third, final war—a world in a state of "future shock," because technology has so far outstripped both politics and morality. The danger today is not stagnation but panic in the face of cataclysmic change—the yielding to unreason under unreason's attack upon reason. Thus the prophetic word today is likely to be "Think!" rather than "Pass the dynamite!"

I am for reason: partly, I am sure, because my whole background predisposes me toward reason's pursuits: toward reflection, consultation, planning, acknowledged compromise, with a deep sense of the flawed nature of man—starting with my own person. Whether you interpret human imperfection as the result of the nearness of the cave or of the ape, or, with a Christian bias, as the result of the Fall, symbol of our willful lousing up of Eden, the reading is the same: unreason is ever nearer, ever threatening to engulf us. Without self-control—which is reason's attempt to subdue unreason—we become beasts, one-dimensional brutes without past or future, enslaved to obscure instincts, lacking even the saving innocence of animals.

I am for reason, too, because I am convinced that not only great works of art but also all great works of love have been wrought by reason. The impulse to create—whether a symphony or an orphanage—may be thoughtless, spontaneous, emotional. But to carry out the impulse and produce something of recognizable, lasting value—be it a symphony or an orphanage—engages the powers of reason. So I have cast my lot with the Presbyterians who believe in getting things done so that they'll last

a while by doing them, in Paul's phrase, "DECENTLY AND IN ORDER."

Finally, I am for reason because I believe in God—in the God who meets us in Scripture. There, when we first meet him, he is busy creating—bringing order out of chaos. The original state of things was a mess. God could not stand it. So he said, "Let there be light!" And, starting with the division between night and day, he pushed the rule of chaos back, until he was in control.

And in the Prologue to John's Gospel, God's creative act is connected with his great redemptive act in Jesus Christ. But what is this act all about? It is about an infinite God, a formless God, who, for our sakes, takes form—human form—willingly trapping himself to mortal time and space in order to carry out our redemption according to his

well-reasoned, gracious plan. Having cleaned up the original, universal mess, he now proceeds to clean up this man-made mess of ours through LOGOS, the DIVINE MIND OR REASON, lodged in the human frame of Jesus.

\* \* \* \* \*

Just a few months ago, I stood in one of the old churches of Paris which, during the French Revolution, served as a Temple of the Goddess of Reason. That was blasphemy, of course, but the present deification of emotion or of freedom is also blasphemy. And today, what with reason being so grossly maligned, we owe it to ourselves and perhaps even to our Creator and Redeemer God to file our own libel suits on behalf of reason—in the struggle with the demonic forces of unreason.

### ON BEING RESPONSIBLE

The Christian is not a good man; he is a responsible man. He is not a judger; he is a doer, and as such a responder to God and a witness to men. Just because of this, however, he is bound to be an undependable soldier in the conflicts set up by this world. He sees the front differently from the technologist or the revolutionary beside whom at any moment he may be fighting in common cause. This front runs between the needs of real human beings and the ambitions or the hatreds of those who claim to mold the future in the image of their own conception of man. It runs between Christ and the powers of this world, and therefore *through* each person, race, class, and cause. Nor is it really a front except in the imagination of those who resist, because it is the real human future opening out in the elaboration of Christ's relation to other men.

—Charles C. West, in *The Power to Be Human* (Macmillan, 1971, p. 247).

# Against the Stream

by THOMAS M. GREGORY

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*"Let God remold your minds from within." Romans 12:2*

As I caught up to a very dirty trailer truck on the highway not long ago I noticed the word "ecology" scrawled upon the back of it. Here in a most appropriate place was the most popular four syllable word of our generation (other than the word sexology). "Wash me" was probably all that the scrawler meant, but I thought only of the free wheeling monster whizzing down the highway as the literal embodiment of the pollution problem. Instinctively I rolled up my window to escape its cloud of carbon monoxide and prepared to pass him as soon as I could.

A chain of thought developed as I edged over to peep ahead. I recalled scenes of environmental devastation, and reams of frightening statistics which testify eloquently that extreme and dramatic actions are needed indeed if our civilization is to survive its contamination of our environment. Dr. Barry Commoner, a microbiologist at Washington University, said, "We are in a period of grace. We have time—perhaps a generation—in which to save the environment from the fatal effects of the violence we have done it." Science, industry and the government, I knew, were alert to the problems and in their way were taking preventive

measures. However, it seemed evident to me that there has been little awareness of some basic human factors in the problem.

A European Conservation Conference, meeting in Strasbourg, France, last February, was much more perceptive. They noted that it has been man's lust for power which has produced such destructive after affects in nature. The question confronting civilization, they said, is not so much how to prevent a selfish exploitation of natural resources, or how properly to dispose of waste material—but how to control man himself. Man seems to be the real problem.

I mused as I drove along behind the truck. Man himself is an insatiable desire. That desire has become more fascinated by power than by persons—or a PERSON. Sartre the Existentialist was right—all we need for hell is man. Man needs something that will enable him to rise above this lethal lust for power. He needs to find the true object of desire. Maybe then he will learn the prosaic fact that cleanliness is next to godliness. And so I mused as I waited for the white line to become broken.

But how can you manage man? One answer I reflected upon had a fascinating attraction about it for we are so prone to think any problem can be



solved by federal funding. Norman Cousins said, "It is not enough to fashion the world's largest mop in an attempt to clean up the human habitat. Humanity needs a world government." More establishment? How will that solve the problem with the bureaucracy it would involve? Enlarging the establishment would probably not strike an optimistic chord for the modern generation, for establishments are notorious for their interest in themselves rather than in God or man. He seemed to suggest that the problems of environment can be resolved by enlarging the status quo. I sadly concluded that this approach has unwittingly ignored the human factor.

My musing turned to a different answer some give to the human problem. Violence! Revolution! Destroy the establishment! But such an answer, I thought, is only an insurrection of despair. It carries with it no hope. I remembered the words of a sympathetic anti-poverty aide in *The New York Times*, on the occasion of the three nights of racial disorder in Mt. Vernon, New York in 1967. "Nobody I've spoken to understands it," the bewildered welfare worker said. "We could understand it (i.e., the rioting persons) if they were fighting for something, but they are not asking for anything we can see." Martin Luther King understood better the bitter hopelessness of this violence for the sake of violence approach when he once said, "When hopes dies a revolution degenerates into an indiscriminating catch-all for evanescent and futile gestures."

Then the white line on the highway ended. My musing suddenly ceased. I stepped on the gas and passed that truck which I had described as a frightening

embodiment of pollution. The philosopher in me surfaced and in self-righteous dismay, I thought man is no longer a rational animal as Aristotle once put it, or even a thinking machine as Spinoza had suggested, but rather he is a polluting biped. And I thought of the vivid language Scripture applies to sinful men—generation of vipers, cesspools of iniquity, white sepulchers. But as I passed the truck, leaving behind my own tainted trail of contaminating gas (a '65 Chevy oil-burner), I saw the trucker rolling up his window. Then it struck me. How hypocritical can one get? St. Paul is right when he said, "I bid everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." The problem of our age is really ALL individuals. That trucker helped me to see that this address must resist the temptation to become the sounding board for either The Establishment or The Revolution.

Revolutionary violence and maintaining the status quo are two main streams of life. Hovering over both of them (these streams) is a deadly fog of cosmic impiety. Caught up in these sweeping currents and breathing in this impiety has led to an intoxication with power rather than with people.

Our message is, therefore, a sobering acknowledgment that among us there has developed an attitude of cynical uselessness, not entirely uncalled for, toward life. Furthermore, that man cannot hope to change himself seems to be empirically true. Nevertheless a basis of hope may be found if man is willing to see that the grace of God is yet available.

In 1948 Karl Barth spoke to an audience of young people in Eastern Europe whose cynicism and despair matched

that of their counterpart today. I paraphrase his words to fit an American audience. When a representative of the older generation spoke to your grandparents when they were graduating from high school, he was able to do so with the self-assurance of a man with a fine and precious inheritance to show and later to pass on. He had a strong background: centuries of the richest imaginable achievement and progress, a venerable civilization on both sides of the Atlantic, gave him a solid platform to stand on. He had the right to demand a respectful hearing and the young people would have been wrong to deny it to him.

Thirty-three years ago when I was listening to a Baccalaureate sermon in a Philadelphia high school, that inheritance was not quite so marvelous and the platform was not quite so high as it seemed. Even at that time there were more problems and anxieties in the air, there were more cracks in the timber than the older generation was willing to admit or we younger people were able to perceive. Our eyes should have been keener, we should have been more like you, for most of us were in families still hurting from the depression, and the gathering of the war clouds in Europe was certainly visible enough. But the walls of the Christian world were still standing, and its light, though already somewhat clouded over, was still visible.

Today that light scarcely shines any more. Western civilization is out of joint. Humanity is divided into mutually hostile camps. Much of science and technology has been concentrated upon forging terrible weapons of death and destruction. False needs, Marcuse tells us, have been implanted in us and then

met, while true needs of the soul have been repressed. And if it has not actually taught crime and corruption, Western philosophy, in defiance of its great history, has not proved to be a restraining and conserving force. We have seen how the morality of modern civilized man has turned out to be a thin covering of ice over a sea of primitive barbarity. We have an art that often is nothing better than a confirmation of our disintegration. We have Christian churches which have only occasionally borne a clear witness in the midst of the disaster of the age. The whole conception of a Christian civilization in the West has been pitilessly exposed as an illusion. And now even the polluted earth cries out against us as it did against the first murderer, Cain.

This then is the world and culture we older people have to show and pass on to you younger folk. All of this developed in the years of our prime when we were in positions of leadership and responsibility. How can we claim a respectful hearing from you?

## I

Our poverty in having nothing to offer in ourselves should make you more open to a message of hope and challenge we used to hear from God, but ignored. You have a splendid freedom from the preconceived ideas and judgments of an older generation. But don't blow it by an unimaginative compliance with the old pseudo-religious way of doing things, or by heeding the hysterical cry to violence. The fact that we have so clearly made a mess of our affairs does not absolve you from the task of making the very best of yours. You are not discharged from the responsibility of trying to go against the

streams of evil that have almost engulfed us. The cards are staked against you, and you may be forgiven by later generations if you are not a 100% success—but you will receive no forgiveness at all, from God or man, if you do not take your life in hand, just as it is, with the utmost seriousness. If you are willing to do this, then God will yet help; he has always been the God of extremities—if not, then God help us.

The apostle Paul looked out upon a declining and decaying Roman empire. This year I have heard historians drawing many parallels between that first century kingdom with death written across its face and our own materialistically oriented society. In that first century world Christians were such a small minority that they had scarcely any influence. Yet it was so easy for pagan Romans to misunderstand their purpose and to think of them as unpatriotic. One obvious way to overcome this kind of criticism was to conform to the Roman way of life. One scholar, in fact, suggests that the book of Acts was written, not only to show that Christ was the universal Lord in the church, but also, to make it clear that Christians were not anti-social—but did in fact support the finer things in Roman law.

While Paul undoubtedly felt that Christianity would help bring a better society, he was also deeply concerned that individuals have a meaningful perspective upon life in a darkening age. There was an alternative to futility for the individual. There was hope for Society. But he insists that it is impossible for either of these to develop if the individual conforms to the popular currents about him. So his imperative was, "Do not be conformed to this world." "Do not let this world squeeze you into

its own mold." And if our modern America is increasingly like that doomed Roman world, then Paul can be seen to be strikingly up to date. His message is for us. Go against the stream. The way of life is neither violence nor status quo, neither irresponsible destruction nor insensitive quiescence.

The temptations to conform to this world are tremendous. Bonhoeffer, the Christian leader the Nazis murdered, wrote words as true for today as for World War II, "Surely there was never a generation in the course of human history with so little ground under its feet as our own." Confronted by so much emptiness, you will certainly feel the urge to yield to practices that are remote from the attitudes of seriousness and responsibility which Paul's injunction of non-conformity suggests. You might be tempted to drown the tensions of the times in drink and drugs. I would not be preaching to you in an acceptable manner if I did not indicate that Paul is imploring us to resist this false way out.

## II

There is, however, a more subtle conformity that tempts us all the more strongly because it can so easily soothe us in an age of unrest. We can drown out the miseries of the times with many activities which are socially acceptable but which contribute little to the solution of man's problems. Karl Barth put it well for us also when he said concerning the generation that permitted the rise of Hitler and Nazism:

By over-indulging itself in technic, sport, and aesthetic amusement it developed a state of mind *or rather*

*mindlessness* in which, through neglecting its responsibilities, it also lost its freedom and fell an easy prey to the slogans and catchwords of the charlatans and dictators.

Barth's words are eloquent support for Paul's injunction, "Do not be conformed to this world."

"How does one go against the stream," you ask? Paul tells us, "Be transformed by the renewal of your mind." "But how is this a breath of fresh air? Today everything we see, including ourselves, is more or less polluted, diluted and devalued. Can the polluted decontaminate itself? Can one-dimensionality produce a transcendent value? Can the leopard change its spots? Again, we ask, 'Who is able?'"

Here is the amazing answer of St. Paul that can still generate hope for us. When Paul says, "Be transformed by the renewal of your mind," he implies we are not only free to do this, but are also held responsible for this transformation. Yet the transformation must be by a renewal of the mind where we are impotent to effect the change. A renewal of the mind, or better, the heart, in the New Testament, is drastic surgery—in fact it is analogous to a heart transplant. Jesus says to a wealthy, well educated ruler, "You must be born again," suggesting the helplessness of Nicodemus, and his need of outside aid in getting a new heart to make a new beginning. "Except a man is born of water and the Spirit," he added, "he cannot see the kingdom of God." Paul takes these words of Christ seriously and explains them by saying, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." "Being in Christ" is to be "transformed by the renewal of your mind." Phillips' para-

phrase of Romans 12:2 catches the deeper meaning: "Let God remold your minds from within." God does that which is impossible for us to do, but for which we are held accountable.

Becoming transformed persons is terribly hard—worse than scrubbing soot off your hands or removing it from the atmosphere. But all things excellent are as difficult as they are rare, as Spinoza once wrote. The freedom and responsibility that are now yours to exercise in life, need a new foundation in order to be strong and useful in the years to come.

### III

In the New Testament your freedom as a transformed person is the same as our freedom in Jesus Christ. He said, "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." We can be transformed persons in him. How? "Follow me," he says. "I don't want so much of your time, so much of your money, I want you." "What I am talking about," he says, "is not like drilling a tooth, or filling it, or putting a cap upon it, but it is like pulling it out," as C. S. Lewis once put it. Hand over your whole conforming self—all the status quo desires you think innocent, as well as the ones you think might be wickedly violent—hand it all over and I will make you into a transformed person, a non-conformist—one who is remolded from within to the good and perfect will of God. Give up your self and I will give you a new self that can go against the stream. In fact, the Son of God says, "Give up yourself and I will give you my self." He will give us purpose to replace purposes.

Earlier I said that man has an insatiable desire that has become fascinated



by power. But here is a person, true man and true God, who can make good on the claim of being the only *true* object of desire. Once he said, "If the Son shall make you free you shall be free indeed." I hope you can understand this a little better than our generation.

Up in the salmon fishing area an old Scottish fisherman had hooked a salmon. His rod was bending almost to the breaking as he tried his best to get the fish he had hooked to head down stream. When asked what he was doing, he said he was trying to drown the fish. Later he explained—if you get the

salmon to head down stream, to go along with the current, it takes the life out of it. My young friends, many of the older ones in my generation have let spiritual life be taken out of them by going along with the stream. But my prayer for you is that you will dare to go against the stream. "Do not be conformed," says Paul, "but be transformed, be remolded, by the indwelling power of Christ." And then, if you are transformed, we might begin to see some transformations here on our polluted but still precious earth.

### HIS MISSION IN HIS OWN WAY

Remember how at the outset of his ministry Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness, not wondering why or how he was the Son of God—he knew all that; but agonizing in prayer as to how it should be accomplished. This was his problem. Now the devil had his own ideas: Be a magician and turn stones into bread; be a wonder-worker and cast yourself down from the pinnacle of the Temple, and when you rise up unharmed the masses will storm their way into the Kingdom of God. And again and again the disciples blundered into the same notion; once they said to him, 'Wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven to consume them?' And Peter drew a sword in Gethsemane, only to be slapped with the rebuke, "They that draw the sword shall perish by the sword." Then, on the first Easter evening, two bewildered followers were on their way to Emmaus and they intimated that they thought Jesus' method would have been to go to Jerusalem and overthrow the civic government and set up his own kingdom there. But remember how he joined them on the road and turning violently upon them, said, 'You fools! ought not Christ to have suffered . . . and to have entered into his glory?' Jesus' mission was to turn mankind from sin to good, from wrong to right, from death to life, and the only way to do it was for his love to invest itself completely in the lives of those he claimed for his own. And when love goes that far it defies verbal description and can only be symbolized by a cross.

—Donald Macleod, in *Higher Reaches*, Epworth Press, 1971, p. 116.

# The Vine-Dresser's Point of View

by SEWARD HILTNER

AND he told this parable, "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vine-dresser, 'Lo, these many years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down; why should it use up the ground?' And he answered him, 'Let it alone, sir, this year also, till I dig about it and put on manure. And if it bears fruits next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'" Luke 13:6-9.

Somewhat similar stories of the barren fig tree appear in both Matthew (21:18-22) and Mark (11:12-14; 20-25). In both the Matthew and Mark stories, Jesus is reported to have been hungry, and to have cursed the fig tree when he found it had no fruit. In the Luke version, however, Jesus tells the story as a parable and not as a personal experience; and although he threatens to have the owner kill the tree, that order is not given.

Generally speaking, the context of the Matthew and Mark versions of the story is the same. In them the emphasis is on faith, the disciples being told that

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they can kill trees and move mountains if their faith is sufficient. An additional stress is put on the power of prayer in Mark and its efficacy in faith, and again there is mention of the moving of mountains.

Since the stories in Matthew and Mark tend to tally so closely, there may be good scholarly reasons for regarding them as authentic. But they have always seemed cruel, even though I am not necessarily against getting rid of dead wood. One can certainly understand it as characteristic of the person of Jesus that he would advocate the virtues of faith and of prayer, and regard them as often making a decisive difference. Perhaps moving mountains is a bit on the side of hyperbole; but to give the *coup de grâce* to a poor little tree that is nearly dead anyhow seems incongruous. Whatever the scholars think on textual and related grounds, it has always seemed to me that the story in Luke is much more authentic to the total character of Jesus.

Here the main theme is not faith, certainly not faith understood as power, but something quite different. And in-

stead of being a reported action by Jesus, it is a story, a parable. And the parable involves something other than immediate decision. It is still acknowledged that a fig tree that fails to do its job, namely, bear fruit, ought not to be kept on welfare permanently. But for the first time in any of the stories, the idea is introduced that the fig tree may be as much a victim as an offender.

The owner of the orchard notices that the fig tree has no figs, and tells his foreman, or vine-dresser, to cut it down. But he does so in a meditative and reflective mood. He asks, "Why should it use up the ground?" Thus, even before the foreman has a chance to reply, he is aware that the owner has some doubts about the order he has given.

The shade of doubt that the owner has intimated is then taken up in a full-blown way by the foreman. He replies, "Let it alone, sir, this year also, till I dig about it and put on manure." We have no way of knowing what the specific motivations of the foreman are. He might have felt guilty, having simply forgotten in the previous years to fertilize the soil in which the tree grew. If so, his present statement contains an element of confession and repentance. He wants another chance. In that event, he would suspect strongly that the fault was his own and not that of the fig tree.

But the motivation might have been other than guilt. Over the previous years he might have carefully watered the tree's soil, and even used the best fertilizer he had available. But in the meanwhile he may have learned, perhaps through the county agent or through attending a vine-dresser's course in continuing education, that he had not used the most effective mate-

rial for stimulating figs. It might be that his discovery of the virtues of manure was very recent.

These alternatives certainly do not exhaust what might have been motivating the foreman. Perhaps he really had, previously, done everything he knew how to do; and now, with no more assurance that trying it again would bring certain results, he had nevertheless become so fond of the tree that he wanted to share responsibility with it, and give it at least one more chance.

Whatever the motivation, the story implies that the owner heeds the foreman's intervention, and agrees to the year of grace. On his part, the vine-dresser admits that he cannot stand up permanently for a figless fig tree, and agrees to its demise in the following year unless some figs appear. He is, after all, only the foreman and not the owner; and whatever his attachment to the tree, he must concede that the owner's soil should eventually be as productive as possible. But his plea for mercy, accompanied by a promise to be responsible, has been heard and heeded by the owner.

The contextual theme in which Jesus introduced the Luke parable was about repentance, along with a severe warning that the need for repentance was not confined to the people one did not like or whose offenses seemed heinous—that, indeed, repentance as a need was universal. But there is an immense difference between declaring the need for all to repent, and providing some time and some new conditions that may make that possible—as against simply getting rid of something at once because it is not doing its job.

I hope it is not eisegesis, but some reasonable facsimile of exegesis, that

makes me think that we in the church and the ministry are, or should be, some kind of counterparts of the vine-dresser. We are not told whether or not the vine-dresser had any co-laborers in the vineyard. Sometimes we are not sure whether or not we have any. But the application of the vine-dresser's concern seems relevant to us, no matter how much or how little help we have.

It is always entirely possible that last year we forgot to water or fertilize the trees in our keeping, or simply did not get around to them, or that then—not having had the agricultural extension course—we did our best but used the wrong materials and approaches. Whether our feeling now is guilt, or hopefulness from new knowledge, or just plain care and concern—the Lord is ready to give us one more chance with even the most recalcitrant of our trees. Indeed, like the owner in the parable, it is his own bit of doubt that stimulates us to make another effort, as intelligently and diligently as we can.

The owner, however, did not lay upon the foreman the responsibility of producing figs no matter what. Limits were set upon the foreman's responsibility. Do everything you can for the next time round. If that does not work, then the tree must go, and give way to something else that can use the soil productively. Even if, a year after the barren tree is cut down, the International Fig Research Institute should discover an infallible way to keep all fig trees going, that will be too late. This fig tree either has its kairos next year, or it becomes firewood.

Perhaps it is a bit shocking to some pastoral sensibilities, but on reflection I have thought it a very good thing that the main tools the vine-dresser must

use are water and manure, or their ministerial equivalents. If water alone were mentioned, the illusion might be given that all means of ministry are clear and pure—even though finding water today that is without pollution is a difficult task.

But the manure is there along with the water. It smells. By ordinary standards, it is dirty. Perhaps we can use a shovel to spread it on; but even so, there is no great distance from one end of a shovel to the other. Even the eventual prospect of a shower for the body and a washing machine for our blue jeans does not render unnecessary the long intermediary process of active involvement with, and high evaluation of, just plain dung. In the vine-dresser's view, ministry is no simple matter of rolling up one's sleeves, or even the bottoms of one's trousers. There are no rollings-up that will preserve a guarantee against contamination. If you want to minister, be prepared to use what seems to be dirt, but which, in the ecology of God, is redemptive and indeed essential for rebirth.

Christian faith is not wrong in providing many symbols recommending the desirability of purity, cleanliness, or refusal to acquiesce in the non-redemptive dirtiness with which the world is well supplied. But not everything that smells bad is dirt of this kind. As Carl Jung noted long ago: there is a kind of negativity or even evil that needs to be encountered and assimilated, and not just denied and cut off. Not that we cave in to evil or negativity. But unless we encounter it, receive its message (or, like the manure, value its life-giving properties), we will float in some never-never land of alleged "spirit" that prevents our using the best available means



(often strongly smelling like manure) to help our people, even the most barren fig trees among them, to become productive and creative and committed Christians.

"... if it bears fruit next year, well and good..." Our job is to use the water and manure (maybe this means sometimes dirty pastoral counseling or nasty realistic preaching) as well as we

can. If we can get rid of our scruples about alleged dirt, maybe we can do more for a lot of those apparently barren parishioners than we have ever believed possible. We do not have to try forever. Our master has given us only limited responsibility. But within those limits, we had better come to enjoy working with manure.

### COMMITMENT THAT TRANSFORMS

"Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom," writes Paul, "and we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another, for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3:17-18.) We forget sometimes the threat in these words. The glory of the Lord was a power no ancient Hebrew believed he could behold and live. It is symbolized in our time best by the awful power beneath the mushroom cloud. Paul was answering the question here: In what relation need we no longer fear the terrible power of the objective reality with which we have to do? How can we cope with knowledge which destroys us when we try to use it to defend ourselves and achieve our own ends?

In order to know objective truth reliably we must always take the risk of personal commitment, and in this commitment be judged and transformed ourselves. This, theology must always learn anew in response to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and, in learning it, commend the way to other branches of the human search for truth.

—Charles C. West, in *The Power to Be Human* (Macmillan, 1971, p. 211).

# Christ's Gift is Life

by LUTHER KRIEFALL

*Since 1964, the Rev. Luther Kriefall has been pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Messiah and chaplain to Lutheran students at Princeton University. An alumnus of Concordia Seminary (B.D.), Washington University, St. Louis (M.A.), and the University of Michigan (Ph.D.), Dr. Kriefall was a Fulbright scholar at the University of Heidelberg, 1957-59. With the current accentuated interest in the phenomenon of death, this memorial sermon, given at the funeral of a 36-year-old wife and mother, is both interesting and instructive.*

*"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand." John 10:27.*

BECAUSE death means that the record is closed, and we can no longer say, "I'll make that up tomorrow," or "I'll do that tomorrow"; because death seems to say that all is now over, all that we planned and did, it is the custom in America not to mention it, even at funerals and memorial services. "Death" is a word too painful to speak, a thought too fearful to think.

We resort, therefore, to euphemism: not "she died," but "she passed away," and to evasion. Maybe it's death that that unexpected philosopher is alluding to, "Don't look back; something might be gaining on you." (S. Paige).

Death is the most senseless thing we can imagine. What sense would it make for an artist to work during the day and to sit up late at night to carve a figure out of a block of wood or marble, if, when it was finished, or before it was finished, the artifact would be demolished. Nor is there sense that we can see in the death of a 36-year-old woman, wife, mother, one contributing to her school and her community.

Death is cruel. We grow by living with and helping one another in a set

of relationships much like a web, one thread touching the next, each supporting the other. Suddenly the web is cut asunder. We would like to evade that consideration.

The fear of death is the most universal dread we suffer because it means—apparently—the loss of identity. While objectives differ—some want most of all to be successful or respected, all want some bit of happiness, a few desire seriously to ease the burden of life for others or to enlarge their scope and freedom—each is seeking to make something to himself. Project discontinued! We cease to be.

Thus, while we want to evade it, none of us escapes its reality, and the fear of death accompanies us secretly in everything we do or leave undone. One *hears* of it in the song of Peter, Paul and Mary, "Where have all the flowers gone?" (It answers, young girls picked them every one, and young girls have gone to young men, young men to soldiers, and soldiers to graveyards.) One *reads* it in a writer like Ernest Hemingway, who seeks time and again to take the measure of death (the bullfight, for

example) and to find the resources in man which will enable him to meet the enemy. We are not comforted by Hemingway's attempt.

Above all, one *feels* death, and that everyday. Death shows itself in my work when my work is too much a burden; in my leisure when it does not rest and relax me; in my face when it is taut and hard. It shows itself in my heart. Each of us aims to live in greater concern for those about him and those outside the immediate circle of his vision. We would love more! But we are not able to love as we would. And this death within the living man is the god's most fierce aspect.

The despair of many moderns today is to be found in this conviction: Death has the last word; it holds trump card. So while we do hope (and we do, for better things), while we do keep active in social and political structures, while we do continue to rely "on that good within every man," what is it we see? The development of our own strength and the release of our own energies do not suffice to give us the better world for which we work. Our politics and our resolutions do not succeed in making us new and better persons, those who love more.

Does death then bring us all to evasion and illusion? Does it really hold absolute sway in the world? Will its senseless, cruel, annihilating work con-

tinue unstopped? Secular man says "yes." The Christian man says "no." A light has shined in a dark place. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory" (John 1:14). "Truly, I say to you, he who believes [in me] has eternal life" (John 6:47). "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, they follow me, and I give them eternal life" (John 10:27). Something new has come into the world with Jesus which is not there apart from him: life that does not die. Christ gives us fellowship with the Father, peace with God. He gives us something which depends not on our survival potential but upon the faithfulness and mercy of God. Death cannot touch what God wills to keep and whom God wills to keep.

But understand. "He who believes in me has eternal life." So believing in Christ is not merely hoping for life after death; it is entering into the hope and the love which we had sought for within ourselves but not found. We have them through him, who is the Life. Do not believe what your senses tell you, then, about this young woman, whom we remember this evening. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand." Not even death, the god of moderns.

# Liebestod

## An Easter Sermon

by HARRY E. CHASE

*Minister since 1968 of the First Presbyterian Church, Tenafly, New Jersey, Harry E. Chase, IV is an alumnus of San Diego State College and of Princeton Theological Seminary, Class of 1951. A native of Baltimore, Mr. Chase served in the United States Navy for ten years prior to studying for the Christian ministry. His career has included five years as chaplain at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York.*

Once upon a time  
there was a Man;  
a very simple Man,  
yet a Man whose simplicity proved to be so authentic  
that when others met him  
he confused the non-simple.

In his simplicity he had a single-mindedness,  
a singularity of purpose  
that he never lost.

Oh, he was tempted to lose it.  
He had to resist the appeal of adulteration,  
the come-on of compromise,  
the temptation to reduce the intensity  
of commitment.

He did not always  
have an easy time.

His single-mindedness,  
his singularity of purpose,  
his one aim and ambition  
was somehow to serve God;  
somehow to live his truth,  
remain faithful to him  
and be obedient to him.  
He really felt his very reason for living  
and his very daily diet  
were, somehow, to do the will of God.

He had a very difficult time.  
His parents did not seem to understand him.  
His brothers and sisters thought he was mentally unhinged.  
They thought "He was beside himself."  
Later in life even when he had acquired some  
very close friends,



they also sometimes wondered about his stability,  
his mental attitude,  
his inflexibility about certain things.

I'm sure when he was a child  
his parents at home must have given up more than once  
trying to understand him.

Well, maybe not just trying to understand him;  
just trying to keep up with him.

One day, when he was a young teenager,  
he was missing from the family.  
The family could not find him anywhere for awhile.

They even looked in the temple.  
Sure enough, there he was—in the temple—  
talking with the rabbis and the priests,  
and asking them questions they could not very well answer,  
even to their own satisfaction.

You and I have known lots of young teenagers  
who could ask adults questions they could not answer.

But somehow his questions were different.

His questions went more deeply into truth. . . .

Even then,  
his parents did not begin to understand him  
very much better.

They had him continue his normal education.

They had him learn a trade  
so he could earn a living.

After all, every young man should be able to work,  
and get married,  
and have a family.

That's what his parents said.

For awhile he did it, or tried to do it;  
but it did not work out.

He was a free spirit,  
refusing to be bound by the conventional,  
and the traditional,  
and the "that's-the-way-it's-always-been" argument.

And when you tried to argue with him,  
you usually lost.

One day when he was a young man  
an extraordinary event occurred in his life.  
Some said he thought he heard the voice of God  
telling him to do certain things.

Others said,

“No, he heard the preaching of John the Baptist  
and was influenced by him.”

Some said John the Baptist told him he was somebody  
who did not even need to be baptized.

Still other people said all of those things had happened  
and many others.

But on that day

he took his place with others

and did get baptized by John the Baptist.

Some people standing around said they heard the voice of God  
blessing this young man.

But others standing around said,

“Oh, that was just thunder you heard.”

But from that moment on,

he was different;

he was very different.

Then, for awhile he went away.

He went somewhere out of town for some six or seven weeks  
because he had to figure out something.

He had to do some very deep thinking,  
and reflecting,

and maybe even some praying.

Because even if he was not sure that he was someone  
very different,

he did feel, he did know,

that he had to do something very different;

very special,

something that was more

than even he could conceptualize at that time. . . .

He somehow knew

that he must bear God's eternal truth to other men;

partly by talking about it,

partly by living it,

partly by demonstrating its power.

But he knew he must now do this.

And he had to think about the best way to do it.

So he went away to think about it.

He thought about a welfare program

of bread for the masses;

but he knew that only to give food for the body

often starves the soul.

He also rejected the idea of sensational demonstrations,  
because he knew that real religion,  
the truth of God that makes a difference,  
is not wrapped in a razzle-dazzle package of stunts  
like jumping off steeples and towers.  
He also refused to compromise with evil.  
That was perhaps his most telling decision of all.  
For the remainder of his short life  
he refused to compromise with evil.  
He would not "go along"  
just to "get along."

Somehow, at the end of that time,  
somewhere out of town,  
he knew his way would be to teach the truth of God  
in its purest form.  
He would help his fellow men  
in every way he could.  
He would question and challenge  
the irrelevant and impersonal  
and the inane, inert institutional.  
He would not swerve from this;  
if necessary he would even die  
rather than compromise any of these.  
From that moment on  
he was God's man.  
No one else would ever claim him  
or lead him away from that purpose.

And so he began.  
He began to teach the truth of God  
in its purest, most primordial form.  
He did not teach what was in the books.  
He taught what was behind what was in the books.  
He did not teach the 613 man-made laws  
that had been invented to keep the law of God  
in minutiae and detail.  
He did not even teach the law of God  
very much.  
Rather, he taught what was behind the law,  
what was behind the Ten Commandments,  
that even led God to give to men  
the Ten Commandments.

He was fond of trying to get people to go beyond  
the very words of the law.

He would say,  
"You have heard it said of old time  
    'Thou shall not kill,'  
But I say to you  
    that whoever hates his brother  
stands in just as much danger of hell's fire  
    as whoever kills his brother."

He would also say,  
"You have heard it was written,  
    'Thou shall not commit adultery'  
But the real meaning behind that  
    is that you should not lust after one another  
    under any circumstances."

That was the kind of truth  
    he taught.  
Not only truth that cut through the words  
    that tried to bind it up in a trapped, caged condition.  
Not only truth  
    that made a difference in men's lives.  
But that truth that somehow gets a man "all together in one place"  
    and shows him the world as it really is.  
That kind of truth  
    that really heals a man;  
Making him "whole" as Aristotle would say,  
    giving him "individuation"  
    as Carl Jung would say centuries later.

He healed men and women and children  
    having all sorts of diseases.  
He taught  
    those who would listen.  
He argued with those  
    who would not listen.  
He challenged those who would not think:  
    and he usually won the argument.  
He had a way of listening through the words  
    to what a person was really saying.  
He had a way of grasping the truth  
    out of a florescentia of verbiage  
and holding it in its solitary splendor  
    like an angel  
    dancing in the sunlight.



But if you watched him for awhile,  
and followed him,  
and, thought about what he did,  
and what he said,  
you began to notice something special.  
You began to notice a consistency of principle,  
a steady guideline,  
which his teachings and healings and actions followed.  
He always seemed to be guided  
by the centrality of the importance  
of the human personality.  
He never used persons  
as a means to an end.  
He always seemed to regard the person  
as an end in himself,  
a most precious sight in the eyes of God.  
His favorite method of teaching  
was the use of parables.  
But if he told a parable of the Good Samaritan,  
he emphasized the importance of the person who was in need.  
If he told about a father who had two sons  
and the one left home  
he emphasized the importance of salvaging that  
human personality.  
When he talked about a shepherd  
who left a flock of 99 sheep  
to rescue one sheep which had been lost,  
he stressed the importance of the one life  
that made it as important as 99 others.  
Yes, that was it.  
The centrality of the importance  
of the human personality  
as a divine end in itself.  
But that was not only true in what he taught.  
It was also true in what he did,  
and how he treated other persons.  
One day he healed a man  
on the Sabbath Day.  
When he was challenged for doing that sort of thing  
on the Sabbath Day,  
he pointed out that the Sabbath was a day  
created to serve man;

Not that man was created  
to serve the day.

He showed the same compassionate concern  
to a woman condemned for adultery.

He knew the law.

He knew the penalty was death by stoning.  
But he also knew that the temptation of sinful lives  
is to destroy another sinful life,  
to conceal personal guilt.

He said,

"If one of you here has no guilt,  
if one of you here stands with clean hands  
and a pure heart,  
then he may first throw a stone."

That was it;  
always oriented toward the salvaging of human personality.  
Salvaging it,  
helping it,  
healing it,  
making it whole,  
integrated.

It was also true  
even when he talked about money,  
which was often,  
even when he talked with the rich young man,  
he was not interested in the man's money.

He was really concerned about the man.

He never said to the man,  
"Bring me your money."

He really said,  
"When you are ready  
come back and bring only yourself."

It was always that way.

Even when lying witnesses testified against him  
in a trial that was a travesty  
he did not scream accusations at them.

When petty governors and soldiers made fun of him,  
and hit him, and spat upon him,  
he did not snarl back at them.

He still had concern for them;  
even greater concern for them  
than he had for himself.

When his executioners had nailed him to a cross,  
and a crowd jeered and ridiculed him  
he bore it patiently.  
Even while he hung on a cross,  
he prayed for them.

When one of the prisoners being executed with him  
asked for reassurance and hope,  
He said to that prisoner,  
"This day you will be with me in paradise."  
That was it.  
He always wanted to heal and help  
the human personality.

Once upon a time  
there was a Man;  
a very simple Man,  
and yet a Man whose simplicity proved to  
be so authentic  
that when others met him  
he confused the non-simple.  
He has been described as:

#### One Solitary Life

He was born in an obscure village, the child  
of a peasant woman.  
He grew up in still another village, where he worked  
in a carpenter shop until he was thirty. Then for  
three years he was an itinerant preacher. . . .

He never wrote a book. He never held an office.  
He never had a family or owned a house. He didn't  
go to college. He never visited a big city. He  
never traveled more than two hundred miles from the  
place where he was born. He did none of the things  
one usually associates with greatness.

He had no credentials but himself.

He was only thirty-three when the tide of public  
opinion turned against him. His friends ran away.  
He was turned over to his enemies and went through  
the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross  
between two thieves. While he was dying, his  
executioners gambled for his clothing, the only  
property he had on earth. When he was dead, he

was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of  
a friend.

Nineteen centuries have come and gone. Yet today  
he remains the central figure of the human race, and  
the leader of mankind's progress. All the armies that  
ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the  
parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever  
reigned, put together, have not affected the life of  
man on this earth as much as that One Solitary Life.

And so he lived,  
and so he died,  
and the world has never really been the same  
since then.

His death was a true "love-death,"  
a "Liebestod."

A love-death that tries to say,  
"I would rather die with you  
than live without you."

A love-death  
testifying to his love for God,  
and God's love for you.

But how are we to know  
whether he was right?

How can we know  
whether he was telling the truth?

How can we know whether he was who he said he was,  
or whether he was the most consummate liar  
the world has ever known?

We really have only one way.

God raised him from the dead.

God resurrected him,  
and ratified all that he had said and done,  
and let that ratification stand for all  
eternity.

That's how we know.

That's why we can be sure.

Christ is Risen!

Christ is Lord!

His truth is forever!

Believe in him and you shall have eternal  
life also;

here and here after. Amen.



# Paul before the Areopagus

by DANIEL T. JENKINS

*Acts 17:16-34*

IT is not clear what the precise function of the Areopagus was at this time. It may have been a court exercising a measure of supervision over matters of religion and morals, which perhaps both provided a platform for visiting speakers and exerted some control over them. In British terms, we might describe it as a kind of cross between Hyde Park Corner and the Open University.

Paul probably spoke, not on the Mars Hill of tradition, which was the original meeting place of the Areopagus, but in the market-place. The speech, which scholars believe to be a compilation of passages representative of Christian teaching to the philosophers of the ancient world, particularly the Epicureans and Stoics, is obviously carefully calculated to make a point of contact with this particular audience. Paul is shown here as trying to do what we are always telling each other we must do in the modern world. He is trying to meet people where they are, speaking to them in language which they understand, facing an intellectual challenge, inviting them to enter into dialogue. Their response provides us with a warning and a little encouragement.

*During the first semester of the academic year, 1971-72, Daniel T. Jenkins was visiting professor at Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania. Dr. Jenkins has held several pastorates in England, served as professor of Ecumenical Theology at the University of Chicago, 1950-62, was chaplain at the University of Sussex, 1963-70, and is the author of a number of books, including The Gift of Ministry (Faber, 1947) and The Educated Society (Faber, 1966). This sermon was delivered in Miller Chapel on the Seminary campus, November 3, 1971.*

## I

Let us look at the situation a little more closely. First, it is clear that the intellectual market-place changes very little from one age to the next. "Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new" (v. 21). At once, we are in the familiar world of the Sunday magazine sections and the ephemeral little periodicals, of those who are not so much interested in finding ideas by which to live as ideas which they can sell; and therefore those which are readily attractive, move quickly and have built-in obsolescence, to make room for the new season's fashions.

Paul has in their eyes the initial virtue, denied to most of us, of being himself a newcomer. Many of them listen to him, therefore, with that characteristic half-amused, half-cynical tolerance with which we are so familiar. "What would this babblers say?" (v. 18). Some have suggested that this word *spermologos* might almost be translated "cock-sparrow," a cheeky picker-up of unconsidered trifles, an upstart trying to make a name for himself by running a new line. Paul's own spirit had been moved by the evidences of religion which he

had seen in the city, and it is important to realize that the idols of which the text speaks were the expression of genuine human need and the incarnations of living ideas. He feels that here are people who are alive to ultimate questions and he welcomes the opportunity to speak to them. We should also note that his appeal is *from* the evidence of this popular religion to that more seriously reflective Greek and Graeco-Roman spirit which is probably as critical of the inadequacies of the popular religion as he is. He wants them to see that the aspiration towards the unknown God, which finds particular expression in the Stoic philosophy, is now fulfilled in Christ, and particularly in his resurrection.

The reception he receives, however, is extremely mixed. Some laugh when he speaks of the resurrection—a notion very strange to Greek ears, especially the Epicureans. They could envisage the immortality of the soul but not what they took to be the resurrection of a corpse. But some say they will hear him further and we are told that in the end he does make a few converts.

## 2

What is to be made of this? If the first and greatest of Christian missionaries, declaring the Christian message for the first time with all the freshness of new vision and with his immense insight and spiritual passion, reached only a few people and was laughed out of court by the rest, are we to conclude that the whole venture was misconceived? Many conservative Christians have drawn this conclusion and said that this story is told to warn us against the dangers of translating Christian

faith in other than strictly Biblical terms.

The warning may often be necessary, but this conclusion is over-simple and misleading. Yet obviously the venture was far from being an unqualified success and this does tell us a good deal about the relation of Christian faith of the intellectual market-place. It is no good expecting faith to evoke a response which issues in commitment on any large scale in that place, because the context is the wrong one. Those who inhabit the market-place are more interested in the traffic of ideas than in finding how a man shall live. They will give anyone a first hearing if he is an interesting newcomer or even if he plays an unexpected variation on an old theme—if he is a bishop who tells us our image of God must go or a professional theologian who announces that God is dead—but once he begins to speak of what is not a mere novelty but a disturbing new reality like the resurrection, then they turn to their protective weapons of laughter, cynicism, and indifference.

Paul's experience does, therefore, offer a warning against taking the market-place too seriously. It is a sign of insecurity and immaturity on the part of members of the Christian community if they are unduly impressed, whether positively or negatively, with what goes on there. Indeed, it can perhaps be said that we should be suspicious if we begin to have a popular following in such a context. Can it be that we are more effective in proclaiming Christ than Paul was? Or is it simply that we have happened to catch the wayward popular mood? To say that anyone who proclaims Christ in the intellectual market-place today is casting his pearls before

swine is arrogantly unfair, but he does need to remember that he is trying to offer the pearl of great price to professional dealers in costume jewelry, and that that is not the best setting for a good bargain. The most responsible thing to do in this situation, as Kierkegaard saw so clearly, is to make sure that the price is kept high rather than to make the pearl look as much as possible like their normal merchandise.

Should we, then, not venture into the market-place at all? I have said that that conclusion is over-simple and misleading, and for this reason. Paul was no fool, and no man knew better than he that what he had to offer was not to be cheapened, yet he went into the market-place. He did so because, with all its limitations, it is still an interesting place and also because he was able to detect the real human concern which often lay behind all the gimmicks and the striking of O.K. attitudes. He thought he could move into this world and take the conversation on to a deeper level. He only partially succeeded. I doubt whether he was so naive as to have expected anything different. The significant point is that he did not entirely fail. Those who wanted to hear further from him were not converted in the market-place. They had to go elsewhere, for a different kind of conversation. Like Nicodemus with Jesus, they may have spoken with Paul by night, undistracted by the noise of the crowd, its opinions, its fashions and its labels. But even in the market-place they heard enough to realize that this was not simply another traveling salesman in the world of ideas and that he demanded a different kind of attention.

## 3

I hope that the ways in which this story provides both warning and encouragement can now be seen. The market-place in the world of ideas today is very large and noisy, doing a great deal of business and concentrating on a very rapid turnover. The academic world is not meant to be the market-place but a place apart, for quiet reflection, experiment and serious dialogue, but the market-place spreads into it, as it sometimes does even into the Church itself, and entices its members with its superficial action and quick rewards. Let us be quite clear about the distinction, so that we understand how the market-place works and what value to put upon its reactions. Above all, when we are exhorted in prophetic tones to go where the action is, let us not fall into the trap of supposing that it is here. The market-place is not where things are grown or made, and it is with these, as the parables remind us, that the Kingdom of God is concerned.

But, when this is seen, we are free to enter the market, only for our own purposes and setting our own terms. The state of the market today is such that what we have to offer is unlikely to be readily accepted, partly because so many churchmen have been eager to operate in the market on its terms, and have lost a good deal of credit. Yet we should be neither surprised nor disheartened. Our cities are still full of idols, and men are still looking for more satisfying goods than the market can easily provide. There are plenty of places in their experience to which we can speak, as Paul did. Of course, it is right to speak their language and to try to stand where they stand if we are to

help them see what we see. Only a few are likely to heed us initially and we shall have to leave the market-place together if they are to grasp the true nature of Christian faith. But these few could be enormously important. Paul's efforts at Athens met with very small success, but some listened and in the fullness of time Athens and all that was deepest in the Greek philosophical tradition acknowledged Christ, and Christian men were able to think the thoughts of their Greek fathers after them in Christian ways.

If that could happen then, similar things can happen now. Although the atmosphere of the intellectual market-

place may be inimical to faith in our time, there is ample evidence that the most creative, deeply thoughtful men are still able to know Christ and believe. We who have a Christian commission must be careful not to cheapen or trivialize what we have received of him so as to make a quick sale in the market-place. If he has been able to lay hold of such superficial and unstable creatures as ourselves, we know that he will also be able, in his own time and way, to make others also give to him the quality of attention which he must receive before they can be brought to believe.

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# The Renewal of a City Church

by EDWIN H. RIAN

WHAT makes *The Oak Lane Story*, written by Richard S. Armstrong, so fascinating is the fact that it defies the contemporary conviction that the Christian Church, and especially the city church, is in deep trouble and with little hope. Here is a Philadelphia church, formerly surrounded by a community of middle and upper-middle class white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants which gradually changed to a neighborhood with one of the largest Jewish communities in the world, many Roman Catholics of different ethnic groups, and finally a growing number of black families, that survived and even prospered.

In the change of population the inevitable happened. The white Protestants began moving to the suburbs so that all Protestant churches were in desperate straits including the Oak Lane Presbyterian congregation. What were the Protestant churches to do?

The Oak Lane Church faced the situation honestly and decided that four options were feasible: (1) relocation, (2) merger with another congregation, (3) dissolution, and (4) rejuvenation through an imaginative and far-reaching program. Oak Lane chose the fourth alternative. The Church adopted a three-pronged approach: (1) membership, (2) program, and (3) publicity.

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This plan, called *Operation Bootstrap*, was inaugurated by the incumbent minister who accepted a call to another position shortly after the program was launched in 1957. Within a few months the Reverend Richard S. Armstrong (Princeton Seminary, Class of 1958) was elected minister and stayed for ten years until 1968 pursuing the process of rejuvenation of the congregation with unique results.

It is not the purpose of this brief review article to outline all of the facets of the plan but to highlight the basic factors which have made *The Oak Lane Story* a beacon light for harassed ministers of city churches and which have created such widespread interest and discussion.

## I.

The first and essential explanation for the spiritual prosperity of the Oak Lane Presbyterian Church experiment is the emphasis on evangelism. Every part of the plan beginning with sermons by the minister, articles in the church magazine, letters to the congregation, discussions with individuals and groups, long and serious considerations by the Session, dedication by the leaders to evangelism and finally by visitation evangelism to every home in the community, was steeped in the conviction that the

chief mission of the Christian church is to evangelize persons and the community with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Evangelism has now become one of the "in" things for the mission of Christianity. A gathering of hundreds of individuals of conservative or evangelical persuasion met in Berlin in 1970. This meeting received much publicity with the principal emphasis of the mission on the confrontation of persons with Jesus Christ. However, the social implications of the gospel also were mentioned.

In September, 1971, more than 3,000 persons from five Presbyterian and Reformed denominations assembled in Cincinnati in a Celebration of Evangelism. This Celebration has also focused the attention of Presbyterians especially upon the essential thrust of the church to evangelize.

Other denominations and groups have likewise joined the increasing accent on evangelism.

What then makes the evangelism program of the Oak Lane church significant or distinctive?

The full-orbed evangel consists of the confrontation of the individual *and* society with Jesus Christ and his demands. So much of evangelism of the past has been centered almost exclusively upon the individual and his relationship to God in Jesus Christ. This has resulted in personal salvation with too little impact upon society in which the Christian lives. Those who stress this sort of evangelism point out that there can be no Christian society without Christians first who will then work out their regeneration in all areas of life. This is true but often the Christian spokesman must also face the issues of the day in society and exhort the be-

liever to deal with these issues in the Christian way. In answer to the lawyer's query, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God. . . . This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

In this summary of God's message Jesus enunciated the true emphasis of evangelism. It must be individual, a man's relation to God in Christ, and social, a man's relation to man and to society. It is like the popular ditty of a generation ago,

"Love and marriage  
is like a horse and carriage.  
You can't have one without the other."

This is the message, loud and clear, which characterizes the evangelism of *The Oak Lane Story*. This church faced the race issue honestly, integrated the congregation with astounding success, spiritually, numerically and financially, and so exemplified the declaration of the Apostle Paul, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." The minister of the congregation believed and lived this message and so did practically all of the members. It really worked.

## II.

The dedicated, consistent and untiring work of the lay leaders is another factor in the spiritual success of *The Oak Lane Story*. The amount of detail, the machinery to execute the program, and the persistent application needed to make the plan operative amaze one's imagination. As an example, *Operation*

*Doorbell*, a slogan for visitation evangelism, demanded calling on the homes in the community one night each week for weeks and months each year and for years. Such ceaseless effort demonstrates a commitment by lay leaders, or any kind of voluntary leadership, seldom found in churches or other organizations. But the Oak Lane Church laymen had that kind of quality, and blessed is the congregation that has it. How that loyalty to Jesus Christ and the gospel was generated is a study by itself which would be highly rewarding for any church.

### III.

The leadership of the minister is the third important element in *The Oak*

*Lane Story*. His genuine modesty, commitment to Jesus Christ, dynamic personality and sincere preaching, teaching and living of true evangelism—all combined to consolidate, energize and propel the program to bring results. He would be the first to discount this reason for making the Oak Lane Church to flourish spiritually and every other way. However, anyone who has read the recount cannot fail to feel the pervasive spirit of the minister in all of the workings of that story. Sermons are truth through personality and so is the entire mission of the Christian minister.

These are the components which would help any city church toward renewal.

# Toward An Evangelical Renaissance\*

by JOHN A. MACKAY

Two recent experiences have moved me to crystallize some recent thoughts on the subject of evangelism and the Christian realities that are at its core. One was reading the remarkable booklet by Richard S. Armstrong entitled *The Oak Lane Story*.

The second was my participation in two small groups of concerned evangelicals that in 1967 and 1968 met near Key Bridge, which connects Washington, D.C., with the Virginia side of the Potomac. Those meetings were held under the leadership of Dr. Carl Henry. Evangelist Billy Graham played a dynamic part in the first gathering, as did his associate Leighton Ford in the second. Grateful remembrance of the spirit, concern, and vision of those encounters has stirred the reflections on an evangelical renaissance to which I now give expression.

It becomes increasingly clear that the chief need of contemporary Christianity and of society in general in this confused and revolutionary time is an evangelical renaissance. By that I mean a rediscovery of the Evangel, the Gospel, in its full dimension of light and power, together with the elevation of the Gos-

*This brief paper was written by John A. Mackay as a personal reflection upon the pamphlet, The Oak Lane Story, by Richard Armstrong, and upon the need for a rediscovery of the Evangel throughout the church. Dr. Mackay, president and professor of ecumenics, emeritus, of Princeton Theological Seminary, has been for over a half-century a world-figure as churchman, missionary, and theological educator. He is the author of many distinguished articles, reviews, and letters and of thirteen books, including Ecumenics: The Science of the Church Universal (Prentice-Hall, 1964).*

pel to the status that belongs to the Gospel of Christ in the thought, life, and activity of all persons and organizations that bear the name "Christian." This renaissance, which is long overdue, is the primary requirement of the world Christian community, from the local congregation to the Church universal. It is equally the basic need of the global community of man.

If an evangelical renaissance is to become a reality and not merely an idea or aspiration, this fact must be remembered and stressed: the Gospel, the Christian "Good News," is inseparably related to Jesus Christ, to his identity as a person, to the work he accomplished, and to his continuing living presence and companionship on the road of life.

It is a moving fact that the personality of Christ is currently becoming the focus of attention in an unusual manner and in most unexpected circles. This is so in the secular as well as the religious order. There is on the march today a many-sided "Jesus movement," an intensified quest for the Christian message. In this context a statement phrased several decades ago in the environs of Jerusalem by a group of Christians from around the world has resounding significance. At the close of a meeting on the

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Mount of Olives during Easter week, 1928, those Christians said: "Our message is Jesus Christ. He is the revelation of what God is and of what man through him may become."

Christianity is Christ. The Bible is a book about Christ. Devotion to Christ, the God-man, crucified and risen, is the central passion of true Christian living. In Christ, God's concern for man becomes manifest. Through Christ the transformation of man, the creation of new men and women, can be accomplished. The evangelical goal is a redeemed humanity. Let this truth be remembered and reemphasized, and its contemporary relevance shown. The Church's abiding task, its timeless imperative through the ages, is to give luminous and dynamic expression to the Gospel. This demands that the Church be sensitive to the human situation in each successive period of history and to the need to make the Gospel's changeless essence meaningful in a changing world.

If this is to be achieved, evangelism must be given fresh significance and vitality. It must not confine itself to communicating the Gospel; it must apply the Gospel to all of life. Individual Christians and the Christian community as a whole have the crucial responsibility of confronting people everywhere, in a discreet but decisive way, with the reality of Christ, and of facing the varied problems of human society in the light and power of Christ. Let the Church be the Church. Let the Church be its true self, which it can be only if it takes evangelism seriously, committing itself to the task of evangelization.

The most succinct and meaningful description I know of what evangelistic

effort involves is this: "To evangelize is so to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through him, to accept him as their Saviour, and serve him as their King in the fellowship of his Church." This statement, first issued by a group of Anglicans some decades ago, merits study in this new age, especially in view of the Church's growing concern about its evangelistic role.

In the past few years a mood has emerged, a movement has gotten under way that augurs the advent of an evangelical renaissance. Here are facts to be pondered that illumine the horizon of tomorrow.

1. Feeling has begun to play a most decisive role in thinking and activity today, very especially in the world of youth. Words written three centuries ago by the French philosopher-scientist Blaise Pascal, one of the profoundest Christian thinkers of all time, have taken on fresh significance. Said Pascal, "The heart has its reasons which reason does not know." The heart—that is, a sensitivity to spiritual ultimates that kindles enthusiasm for a cause or idea—is becoming more and more manifest in the present generation of young people. This is true both inside and outside the Church. Crusaders are appearing who embarrass the generation of their fathers.

2. It is a striking fact that the reality of Jesus Christ as a living Presence is central in the experience and ideas of these new crusaders. Hundreds of thousands of young people of very diversified church backgrounds participate in the Jesus movement. They are related to a wide variety of evangelical groups that are making an increasingly significant contribution to evangelism. The

concern for evangelism in official church circles (a concern that, happily, is growing) must take this new phenomenon very seriously, learn from it, and bring about meaningful contact with those involved in it. Leading newspapers and magazines in the United States have given much attention to the Jesus movement, and one thing they have stressed is how richly human those youths become who have passed through the experience of spiritual rebirth.

3. This radical change in outlook and character that multitudes of people are experiencing in this country and in other countries of the world is being paralleled by colossal growth in the Christian community. This is particularly true in Latin American and African countries, and in such lands as Korea and Indonesia.

4. The force that appears to be making the greatest contribution to the current Christian revival around the globe is Pentecostalism. This movement, which began several decades ago, and which in its early years was very sec-

tarian in character, is now becoming ecumenical in the deepest sense. A neo-Pentecostalism has lately appeared that includes many thousands of Roman Catholics. The Roman Catholic Church today is giving new status to the Bible, to the Gospel, to the living Christ, and to Christian fellowship across ecclesiastical boundaries. A new era of the Spirit has begun. The charismatic experience moves Christians far beyond glossolalia. It creates a comradeship in Christ and makes manifest, through the power of the Spirit, that what really matters in world Christianity is not the pursuit of organizational oneness but cooperative effort, Christian companionship in making the Gospel real in its full dimensions.

There is light on the horizon. An evangelical renaissance is becoming visible along the Christian highway from the frontiers of the sects to the high places of the Roman Catholic communion. This appears to be one of the most strategic moments in the Church's history.

# The Gospel

by EARL F. PALMER

I have been asked to lead the Bible study this morning on the meaning of the *kerygma*. The Christian gospel has its roots deeply embedded in the Old Testament. To begin this study, I want to turn your attention to Abraham and consider some of these Old Testament roots of our Christian gospel. The date of Abraham is 1800 B.C. He is a citizen of the Ur of the Chaldeans, a great city, distinguished culture, already a thousand years in existence before the year 1800. He is called by God to establish a new people. You are familiar with that tremendous passage that is found in the 12th chapter of the Book of Genesis:

"Now the Lord said to Abraham, 'Go from your country, and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you, and I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and him who curses you I will curse and by you all the families of the earth will bless themselves.'"

Abraham obeys this call. He chooses his land, settles, succeeds with ups and downs, and finally in his old age, he has his son, Isaac, the son of promise.

*A principal address at the Celebration of Evangelism in Cincinnati, Ohio, September 21, 1971, was given by the Rev. Earl F. Palmer, minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Berkeley, California. An alumnus of the University of California and of Princeton Theological Seminary, Mr. Palmer has served pastorates in Seattle, Wash., and in the Philippines. (This sermon will be included in a forthcoming volume, featuring the Celebration of Evangelism, to be published by Word Books, Inc., and appears here with the permission of the editors).*

Then in the 22nd chapter of Genesis comes the incredible request of God for the sacrifice of Isaac. Let me read this passage of chapter 22 of Genesis:

"After these things, God tested Abraham and said to him, 'Abraham,' and he said, 'Here am I.' And He said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you.' So Abraham rose early in the morning, sat on his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place to which God had told him. On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. Then Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you.' And Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife and so they went both of them together.

"Then Isaac said to his father, Abraham, 'My father,' and he said, 'Here am I, Son.' And he said, 'Behold the

fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?' Abraham said, 'God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.' So they went both of them together. And when they came to the place to which God had told him, Abraham there built an altar, laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar upon the wood. Then Abraham put forth his hand with the knife to slay his son, but the angel of the Lord called to him from Heaven and said, 'Abraham, Abraham.' (This is the first of what will become a series of dramatic interruptions in the history of God's people, Old and New Testament.) The angel interrupted him saying, 'Abraham, Abraham.' And he said, 'Here am I.' And he said, 'Do not lay your hand on the lad or do anything to him for now I know that you fear God, seeing that you have not withheld your son, your only son from me.' And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked and behold, behind him was a ram caught in the thicket by the horn. Abraham went and took the lamb and offered it as a burnt offering instead of his son. And so Abraham called the name of that place 'the Lord will provide' as it is said to this day on the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided."

This incident in the 22nd chapter of Genesis is the most harrowing and important moment in Abraham's life, and it has, it seems to me, tremendous significance for us when a correct focus is maintained in interpreting the events. There are two ways to look at the Mt. Moriah incident, and both are a part of a whole picture. The first view sees of this experience a proof of the great faith

of Abraham. In other words, Abraham was being tested to see if his obedience was strong, and Abraham endured the test. Now the problem for us with such a view is that we are offended and disappointed that such a choice should be posed to Abraham.

The second view, it seems to me, the more fundamental, sees something different. Now in order to understand this second way of looking at Mt. Moriah, which is in my opinion the more profound, we have to understand first of all something about Abraham and his time. Human sacrifice at the time of Abraham was common among all of the nations in the Middle East. It is called Moleck in the Bible. The Moabites, the Amorites, and later the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, and all of the people in the context of which Abraham lived, practiced human sacrifice. Very often the first son would be sacrificed as part of fertility rites. *National Geographic Magazine*, a few years ago, did an article on one of the Assyrian marduk gods, which was a child sacrifice god. They actually excavated one of the statutes with its two arms out and the fire below where a parent would place his child. Now this was a common practice in the time in which Abraham lived. Therefore, it seems to me very important to understand this event in the light of that context, and Abraham probably thought of the request that God made in the 22nd chapter of Genesis in the perspective of that terrible context in which he lived. He probably said to himself, "Ah, I knew a moment like this would come. I suspected it. Why shouldn't it come?" Even though the text begins by God admitting to Abraham that he knows how much he loves this son—"Take



Isaac your son, whom you love"—Abraham probably said something like this: "Ah, but God who called me at Ur, who has led me, whom I obey, is now going to ask of me the same symbol of devotion that all of the other gods do."

This is the context of Abraham's life; he has no reason to expect anything different. Why should the God who called him to go and establish a new people, why should he expect or set up any different means or drama and expression of love and affection or obedience to himself than any of the other gods? And it seems to me that this is the context in which Abraham probably reacted. Now he may have been bitter, and he may have been hurt. But he is resigned to do what everyone else does. This is the religious system of his time. This is the religious context and expectation.

Therefore, we who live on this side of Mt. Moriah, we who live on this side of the New Testament, we ought not to use Abraham's willingness to sacrifice human life as a sign of great faith. In fact, it is interesting that the Apostle Paul, who talks about this passage on two occasions, and the writer of the Hebrews, when he talks about this passage—when Paul sees at Moriah the faith of Abraham, he uses that marvelous little phrase that "Abraham hoped against hope." Abraham's faith, Paul said, was his faith that somehow God would provide something, that God would do something new. That's the faith, not his willingness to sacrifice Isaac. No, in fact something far more important is taking place here than Abraham's faith. Something more important is being shown at Mt. Moriah, because at just the right moment, by surprise, when Abraham least expected

it, though he hoped for it, God interrupted Abraham.

You know, Rembrandt is the greatest interpreter of the Old and New Testaments in all of the history of art. In many ways he is one of the greatest commentators of all time, but not all of Rembrandt's paintings were original. In many cases, like his Sea of Galilee painting, he copied from another painter, an earlier painter of his time. Rembrandt did a painting on the Mt. Moriah incident, and in this case also, Rembrandt copies another painter, Pieter Lastman, who had previously treated that scene. Rembrandt's interpretation is almost identical except for two distinctions. In the Lastman painting, Abraham is about to sacrifice Isaac. The son is bound, Abraham has the dagger tightly gripped in his hand and the angel has come down and is wrestling with Abraham, saying, "Abraham, Abraham, do not offer your son." Rembrandt, who had a far profounder insight into the true emotions and feelings of Abraham, makes two alterations in the painting which he copies, and his painting is far the greater.

The father's face is furrowed with deep anxiety and sorrow, and the two differences in Rembrandt's painting is that he has the father place his hand over the face of his son. In Rembrandt's painting, the father stands with his hand over his little boy's face. The father cannot bear to have the son see him. And then secondly, the knife. In Rembrandt's painting, at also the same moment that the angel interrupts the father Abraham, just as the angel touches the father, the knife is let go and the hand is open and the knife is falling to the ground. In the Lastman painting, it is almost as if the father

religiously wants to follow through and do the murder. As Pascal said, "Men never delight in doing evil as much as if they can do it for religious reasons." The earlier painting, in one sense, portrays the father as delighting in his great sacrificial and heroic acts because he is doing it for God. But Rembrandt saw something far more profound—he saw the gospel. And Rembrandt sees that the father doesn't want to slay his son at all, and the moment the angel says "Abraham!", he drops the knife. As the knife is being thrown away, his hand is open.

Men and women, what really happened at Mt. Moriah is that at just the right moment, by surprise, God interrupted Abraham, and I submit to you that this radical intervention is the big event at Mt. Moriah. Up to now, Abraham has obeyed the God of authority who called him. You can't fault him on that. There were a few ups and downs, of course. But he has followed, and he has followed right to the bitter end here on Mt. Moriah.

But now in his old age, Abraham meets the God of love who cares for him and cares for what Abraham cares for, his little son. Something new has happened. Abraham, trudging up Mt. Moriah, is a typical religious figure like many men in the history of man's story who have ventured great sacrifices for God or for some cause that perhaps was their god. Many men have sacrificed people for causes, and Abraham trudging up the mountain with his little boy is a typical religious figure. But Abraham and Isaac run down Mt. Moriah—a new man, a new fellowship. God has taken upon his own shoulders the total responsibility for the man and his boy and that is the big event at Mt. Moriah.

And the whole history of the gospel begins right there when God took the total responsibility for our lives upon his shoulders. What Abraham and Isaac have experienced on Mt. Moriah is redemption and resurrection.

It is interesting that the writer of the Hebrews, in interpreting Mt. Moriah, says that Abraham received Isaac back as if he were resurrected. We see that death and the resurrection events are brought into focus in a shadowy and symbolic way on Mt. Moriah. And less than a mile from Mt. Moriah is another hill, Golgotha. What Abraham experienced in part and in a shadowy way on Mt. Moriah was fulfilled, made concrete, actual, universally relevant and totally personal at Mt. Calvary to the sacrifice of God's Lamb, Jesus Christ.

The problem with that ram caught in the bushes is that you cannot relate to the ram. You feel sorry and pity for the ram who takes the place of Isaac, but you cannot relate to it. What happened on Mt. Moriah is made actual, concrete, universally relevant and totally personal where God himself became the lamb on Golgotha. And that lamb was Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Now there are the Old Testament roots of our gospel that we have come together to celebrate. The question for us today, it seems to me, and the question we must cope with now briefly in the New Testament, is what are the implications of the decisive intervention of Jesus Christ for you and for me and for our generation? What does this decisive intervention of Jesus Christ mean in history, which is what the New Testament account is all about?

I asked you to read Acts 1 and 2. In Acts 2, Peter gives the first of the kerygmatic messages of the Book of Acts,

and the main focus of that message is Jesus of Nazareth:

"Men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders, signs which God did through him in your midst as you yourselves know, this Jesus delivered up, according to definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men, but God raised him up, having loosed the pangs of death."

What Peter is saying is that Jesus Christ has taken our place and has won the decisive victory over death.

Now what are the implications of that tremendous statement by Peter? What are the implications of the radical intervention of Jesus Christ in history? I'd like to consider with you here this morning two vital implications of the gospel.

(i)

The first, as a result of the intervention of Jesus Christ, who is the Word of God coming into this historical situation in which I live, bearing upon himself my sins, my nature, my failure, conquering death itself, the implications of this, first of all, is that *the meaning of my life, your life, is now settled*. Abraham found out on Mt. Moriah that God cared for what he cared for—his son. And now our real and concrete worth has been settled at the cross and it has been confirmed in our Lord's victory over death.

Now this is what redemption and resurrection means. Karl Barth put it this way: "In the Gospel, I make this discovery, that *God is for me*." Read that sentence four different ways. God, the Creator, the Father Almighty, the

Sustainer, the ultimate "I AM"—God is for me. Not for an angel, or an apparition, or a spiritual force—but God is for me! God is for me! Present tense, right now. God is FOR me! He takes upon his shoulders the responsibility for my way. It's man struck low under sin; it's man the failure; it's man in the midst of his crisis that God loves. God is for ME—my real self.

And in response to this, our faith means simply this: that I bring that self, my real self, to Jesus Christ. Do you remember Paul in the 12th chapter of Romans gives an amazing portrayal of faith? This is really the climax of the Book of Romans. "I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, because of the grace of God, in view of the grace of God, I appeal to you" (and now this very interesting, sparse little sentence) "to present your bodies as a living sacrifice." Now that is an amazingly simply portrayal of faith. Faith means that I bring my real self, as I really am, to Jesus Christ. This is the implication of the radical intervention of Christ in my behalf. And I now know that it is my real self that God loves. Paul didn't say, "Bring your spirit." He didn't say, "Bring your soul." He says, "Bring your 'soma,' your body." That is the real you. I like to translate that "problematic me"—my whole self as I really am—with my doubts, with my fears. I bring what I am. I am so grateful that the New Testament did not idealize me, but has a realistic view of who I am. The real me—that is myself with my race, with my sex.

As C. S. Lewis has the devil say in effect in *Screwtape Letters*, "I don't understand the enemy because he wants to have his cake and eat it, too. Why

doesn't he cancel out these creatures?" The devil cannot understand the fact that God loves us without absorbing us. But God's love liberates you to be what you authentically are. And this is portrayed in Paul's appeal for faith. He says, "Because of the love of God, I urge you to present your bodies, your real self." I'm not cancelled out, and I am not idealized.

In Acts 2 when the people heard Peter's sermon, they asked, "What must we do to be saved?" And Peter said to them—and I love again the sparseness, the simplicity of this sentence—"Repent (that simply means to turn around) and be baptized, every one, in the Name of Jesus Christ and for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Repent and believe. You and I will never be asked to sacrifice anything to God but our hearts given in gratitude. God does not need your broken body. Our God deals in life. Jesus said, "I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly." And Paul in Romans says, "I beseech you to present your body a living sacrifice." There is nothing masochistic or sadistic in the New Testament portrayal of faith.

We might ask why the drama was acted out on Mt. Moriah. In the profoundest sense, that whole event was probably experienced by Abraham so that the very steel grip of the religious context in which he lived could be broken. And there is no way to break that steel grip apart from working it through and resolving it, and that resolution experience is what is taking place on Mt. Moriah. The radical intervention of God once and for all clears the air that God's will for our life is not for us to sacrifice our sons or our wife or our-

self, as if a broken and beaten up and destroyed human personality is what pleases God. It's your real self—you alive—with what you love now set free and liberated and enriched that God wants! And that is why Abraham and his son run down Mt. Moriah.

Now the ethical and moral implications of this intervention are profound. If the meaning of my life has been settled, if I now discover my own worth, the meaning of my neighbor's life has also been settled. Dietrich Bonhoeffer in the *Cost of Discipleship* makes this theological point very clear. He says that as a result of the radical intervention of Christ, from now on I am not permitted to have a direct relationship with any other human being. From now on I have a mediated relationship with every other human being. That is to say that I now see every man in the light of the love that I know already has been shown toward him. Christ has interrupted human history by the cross and by the open tomb and that interruption stands across the path in every relationship I have with the world and with my fellowman. Whether my fellowman knows it or not, his worth is already settled, so far as I am concerned. I do not have to decide on his worth. That is settled. This is part of the profound theological implications of the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. That means that my neighbor, whether he knows it or not, whether he likes it or not, has already been loved by God. The decision about him has already been made. I don't have to decide then whether he is of worth. I don't have to decide whether he deserves my love. That has been settled. The ground upon which he stands has already been settled. He needs to know it, to discover



it, to accept it. In a sense, my task is to invite him to discover something that has already been given to him. Our faith then is always going to be a response to God's love which has already happened—which is already prior.

This is what Bonhoeffer means when he says, "I have a mediated relationship with my neighbor." I see my neighbor in the light of Jesus Christ. That is not a lofty way of saying that my neighbor and his distinctiveness has been obliterated. There is a lot of foolish thinking that says you look at people through rose-colored glasses and you do not see their distinctiveness, do not see their individuality, their uniqueness, and that is not true to the biblical perspective. This great truth of the gospel does not cancel out "Black is Beautiful" or "White is Beautiful." This doesn't rule it out at all. No, our uniqueness has been settled. We're not cancelled out. We're not blurred. As a matter of fact, we are now better able to appreciate the uniqueness and distinctiveness of every human being because Jesus Christ has made him and what he created is now confirmed in redemption, and it is founded on far deeper ground than before.

## (ii)

Now the second implication—*my task in the world is authentically simplified*. If the first implication is that the meaning of my life is settled; the second is that my task in the world is settled and brought home to me without the possibility of escape. And now take a look at Acts 1 in this context. Acts 1 opens with the final encounter of Jesus Christ with his disciples. Look at verse 6, chapter 1: "So when they

came together, they asked him, 'Lord, will you at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?'" You know, that sentence blows my mind! That is an incredible sentence! "Lord, will you at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" Think of it. The final earthly encounter of the disciples of Christ and their master. (I really respect Luke for putting this in, for portraying the disciples so realistically.) Think of it—the last earthly encounter of the disciples with Christ is a gripe session. They honor Jesus. Of course, you know we always begin our gripes by honoring someone. "I really like you, but . . ." or "You're really a marvelous person, but . . ."

I had a schoolteacher once, and there was a fellow in our class she just couldn't stand. We all knew it because she said that if we elected him as class president, she would impeach him. This was before student liberation movements when teachers had such unchallenged power. She said, "I will impeach him." And so then, of course, we elected him. And she didn't. She backed down. But anyway, she would always say this: "Now, I'm very fond of Joe, but . . ." So we came to the conclusion in my high school that if this particular teacher says that she is fond of you, then you are really in trouble. She always said that about the people she disliked.

Now the disciples honor Jesus. They say, "Lord, will you at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" Jesus is Lord to them, but nothing can hide their keen disappointment in what has happened to date. They had hoped for something different than what they had. Dietrich Bonhoeffer says that the Kingdom of God is the kingly reign of Christ, and these disciples had been

in the midst of it, and the whole time they didn't see it. They had something else in mind, something religious, like the Amorites and the Moabites had for themselves—going up to the idols, having a beautiful statue to drop your children on and they tumble off into the fire. Everybody is doing it. It's the way it is supposed to be. And the disciples have built up an expectation which is now still unfulfilled. As a matter of fact, our Lord Jesus Christ all through his ministry disappoints our expectations. It is one of the most eloquent proofs of his Messiahship, that he disappoints about half of our expectations.

You know, one of the ways to communicate with someone is to disappoint them. If you just confirm expectations, then after a while—we're all like computers—we computerize their response and easily compartmentalize someone and don't hear them. If somebody doesn't get under your skin and disappoint you to a certain extent, then you don't hear them. And Jesus did that magnificently. The disciples had been with our Lord all these years, and yet they are disappointed. They had hoped for something different from what they had. They had a dream out of the past. They had it built around David. You know, in the whole history of Israel, the one moment of glory is in the brief period of David's reign. Ironically, the reason that that moment was so glorious was because there was a lull in the international situation.

The disciples, as well as their contemporaries, have built up a tremendous davidic expectation. I'm not mocking it . . . it is beautiful. This davidic hope for a king like David, a deliverer like Moses, and a father like Abraham. That is one way of perceiving the whole

messianic expectation of the Old Testament. And Jesus Christ in a profound way fulfilled these expectations, but he also disappoints every one of them. He disappoints the deliverance expectation, he disappoints the davidic expectation, and also he disappoints the identity, the tribal expectation of Abraham. But in a deeper sense, he profoundly fulfills them.

But our Lord's followers have a dream built up, and they want this davidic dream fulfilled, this Kingdom they want fulfilled, and in their mind, it is not yet fulfilled. And so they say to Jesus in this last encounter. Imagine what a letdown! If they knew this was going to be their last sentence, they probably wouldn't have said this; they'd have said something more spiritual, like, "Lord, thanks a lot for what you've done" or something like that! But they don't realize. And so they are very honest. I respect the candor in the New Testament people. Jesus did not squelch his disciples. And so the disciples are what they are. So they say, "Now Jesus, it's been wonderful, the resurrection and all, but now let's get down to the really important matters. Lord, will you at this time . . ." See, they don't yet see that the kingly reign of Christ is the Kingdom of God. "Will you at this time now finally restore the kingdom of Israel?" As I see it, they are asking really two questions. They want this dream out of the past restored. You know men have always wanted something out of the past restored, and it is usually a fantasized, idealized, past hope—old time religion or something like that they want restored. And then secondly, they want to know a specific timetable for the future. Are you going to at this time—the word "time" here

is crucial in that sense. *When* are you going to do it? I'd like to know. I've got to make plans.

Now as a matter of fact, both of these longings grow up instinctively at a time when the mood is grave and apocalyptic. When a future shock is taking place and events are racing, at these apocalyptic moments, these kinds of longings always emerge. At a time like that when things are falling apart at the seams, and they were in the first century. (By the way, that is why the Book of Acts is so relevant for our time.) In just a few years, Jerusalem is going to fall actually and the Romans are going to kill many people. They are going to scare everyone else away, and they are even going to change the name to Aelia Capitolina, and eradicate all memory of Jerusalem from the face of the earth. It is all going to happen in a very few years. Things are falling apart in the face of it, and at moments like this, people usually do these two things: they begin to long for a certain idealized part of the past or they become tremendously fascinated with the timetables of the future. Both of these longings are understandable.

By the way, our age is similar. We are living at a time when our people are fascinated with astrology and occult, spiritualism, propheticism. These are natural instincts that come up out of our life. But look what Jesus gives in answer to the disciples. Jesus reaches inside of their question to the hearts of these beloved friends and he gives them something far better than what they ask for. Listen to the passage: "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And he said to them, "It is not for you to know." He starts with a negative, another disappointment. (Oh, no,

Lord, not another one of those disappointments!) "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority, but you shall receive power."

Our Lord always gives grace when he judges. Whenever a judgment appears in the Old Testament or the New Testament, grace is right alongside of it. And whenever Jesus disappoints our expectations, he always gives us something far better in their place. "It's not for you to know the times and the seasons, but you shall receive power." You, Abraham and Isaac, the way you are, you as you are—"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you shall be my witness in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria and the end of the earth."

Let me try to interpret that incredible sentence. "It is not for you to know." What Jesus does in this sentence, it seems to me, is to affirm the humanity of his disciples and, men and women, that is good news for us in this Celebration! It is good news for the Church, to get all of the idealizations of the disciples and ourselves out of our minds. "It is not for you to know." We are not the managers of the future. We are not the savior. We are not even angels. Thank God we are men and we always will be! Man is man and will always be man, and man is not God and will never be God. That is what our Lord is getting at when he says on the Sermon on the Mount, "Judge not lest ye be judged." The theological impact of that sentence is that when Jesus takes away from us the right to judge, he is saying we are not God and we never will be. What a liberation! It sets you free. Jesus sets you free by affirming your humanity. This is what is so ex-

citing about the biblical doctrine and the Calvinistic doctrine of the total need of man. It is a good doctrine. It is so democratic. It levels us all. It puts us all on the same ground. It affirms our humanity. You don't have to be anything but a man. It is not for you to know. Jesus takes the management of the future off your shoulders. Remember that when somebody brings huge charts to you about the future shape of things and wants you to reflect on them and preach about them. We are not given that. We were given something else to do that is a lot more creative.

Jesus Christ takes his disciples and places them in the real world of Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria—our world. He places them there as real men with our Isaacs, real men with our fears and loves, our real selves. And to these real men, he gives the promised power. And here, let us have some healthy doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus now here introduces and promises, and which has been earlier promised in the resurrection accounts and throughout our Lord's ministry, is this: the Holy Spirit is God confirming in our hearts the speech he made in Jesus Christ. John Calvin described the Holy Spirit doctrine as follows: "The whole of it comes to this. The Holy Spirit is the means by which Christ binds us to himself." And what Jesus is saying to the disciples is this: "I'm going to be the one to give you the power." Notice, there are no conditions. After you fulfill ten conditions of the Spirit, then you will receive power—there is none of this. You will—simple, future indicative—"you WILL receive power. I will do it." That's off our shoulders, too. It really is true then. We are released of all elaborate schemes

to be powerful or of inordinate fascination with power. Karl Barth says, "The fascination for power is the fascination with the devil."

As a matter of fact, in the gospel we've discovered that the omnipotence of God and the grace of God are the same thing. He sets us free from unreal kingdom fascination. He simply says, "You will receive power. I'll do it. I'll give it to you." And when the Holy Spirit comes on the day of Pentecost, all the Holy Spirit does is to affirm these disciples of Jesus Christ. And when they experience that affirmation, they preach Christ. They don't preach the power of the Holy Spirit, they preach Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. And that's what happens when he makes the promise to you and me. These real men who have just asked this foolish, trivial question, who don't understand that the king is right in their midst, these men . . . and he doesn't rebuke them for the question. He simply says, "That's not your job. That's my job. I'm in management, you're in sales." Something like that. And he gives us the job to do, and I hope you can discuss the job this morning and throughout the week.

The task, it seems to me, is that we are to live out this redemption and victory of Christ over death. The implications are profound and wholesale. Live it out. Live it out toward my neighbor. Now I have a whole new way of looking at my neighbor because Christ has interrupted everything at Mt. Moriah and on the cross. Now we are to spell out the meaning of the victory of Jesus Christ in every conceivable direction. There are no holds barred. "Ye are to be my witnesses." And they did. They obeyed him. And that is why we are here today.



# Programming Professionals without Precedent

by JAMES E. WALLACE

THE data currently at hand indicate that the cognitive learning and the internalization of appropriate norms required for equipping professionals to perform the tasks to be done now and within the foreseeable future will push the more traditional models of professional education to their limits, if not requiring their abandonment at least in part. We are no longer surprised at change. But we become hard pressed to find viable precedents to meet the consequences which some change seems to foreshadow.

Thus, the legal profession is being aroused by the shape of things to come and finds that the accustomed methods of preparing people to enter that profession are not totally satisfactory. More specifically, the fact of specialization, the inadequacy of the profession's monopoly in rendering certain services, the increase in the education base of the discipline, and the requirements of competence all now give legal educators cause to pause, to question, and to attempt the redesign of legal education. Some examiners of the scene have been so bold even as to question the sacredness of *three* for the number of years needed to educate the professional in law!

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As a footnote to this introduction, it should go without saying that these four areas of strain upon the tradition of educating legal professionals by no means exhausts the list. They are but part of the frontier of change within legal education. In addition, they may find counterparts in the confrontation with change in theological education.

## *The Fact of Specialization*

Reluctantly, but in general, the legal profession has now come to accept the fact of specialization within its ranks. This acceptance of reality in regard to the structure of the practice of law did not come without great denials, and it occurred but recently. In fact, it was not until 1969 that the delegates of the American Bar Association could affirm the fact of specialization within the legal profession without the necessity of debating the issue at length. The myth of the omnicompetent lawyer (although there are still pockets of strong support for the myth) has been dispelled, and now it is generally admitted that the lawyer is not and cannot be the jack of all legal trades.

The tremors which the unmasking of this myth of omnicompetence set in motion are still being felt. The realiza-

tion of the fact of specialization, for example, rocks the boat of traditional legal education. For when the lawyer was deemed to be omniscient, his education into that competence required only that he learn *all the law*. And so the three years of legal education were consumed by the required courses of the body of law. Curricula were built upon the paradigm of basic and prerequisite courses which finally led the student through the maze of the law, except for some relatively esoteric bodies of law which were treated as electives, such as admiralty or patent law.

No longer does that paradigm fit the scene, mainly because all of the law is not now (if it ever was in the last two generations) learnable by a single person. The very complexity of the law requires limitations in its study. More important, though, is the fact that the rendition of competent legal services necessitates specialization within a single or comparatively few areas of law. The dramatic fact in this developing acceptance of specialization as a norm for the legal profession is the recognition of the norm by those seeking entrance to the profession. Preliminary data indicate the law students, upon entry into law school, have general, if only nascent, ideas about the area or areas of law in which they want to specialize.

Thus, when this fact of specialization is translated into the context of legal education, deans get ulcers, turn grey, and decide to go back into teaching. What do you do with the student who declares that he wants to specialize in urban land developmental law and therefore has no concern for the intricacies of trial procedure? The answer to this question may be somewhat akin to that given to the student who declares

that he wants to become involved in an action ministry and has no desire to become a pulpiteer, so why take a course in homiletics.

As yet, no one has come up with an acceptable answer to this dilemma in legal education. Various schemes have been proposed and even tried, such as establishing areas of concentration analogous to an undergraduate major where a person can follow a particular track of learning which will emphasize the limited areas of his specialty interest. Also it has been proposed that educating legal professionals be accomplished on a 2-4 plan: a two-year program to obtain a basic legal education sufficient to enable the person to pass a bar examination; and an additional two-year program for the person who seeks some specialty expertise. Further, some educators advocate a fourth year in an internship program in a specialty area, while others take the stance that there really is no need for change in the basic plan—all we need do is rediscover the Renaissance man who will be complete for the tasks at hand and those yet to be done.

The curricular hassles incident to the fact of specialization are not new to theological educators. There may be some question about the recognition of the fact of specialization with the ranks of theological professionals, but the agony with which Greek and Hebrew were eliminated from the list of required courses attests to the recognition within theological education that not all candidates for the professional degree need that knowledge or those language skills in the bag of tools which they will require in rendering competent services.

Upon reflection, there appears to be some common threads which run

through the problems of educating professionals in theology and law. For one thing, we know very little about the skills which these professionals do need for the tasks which must be performed today and tomorrow. Lists of skill requirements have been made, but often they have little relation to the data of human experience. Further, we have some ideas about the cognitive learning that may be important in the socialization of the professional, but even here there is disagreement concerning that knowledge which is "fundamental" or basic to the functioning of the professional. Why, for example, should every law student take property law? And in addition, we are woefully lacking in knowledge about how these adults we call students learn. The packaging of legal education has not changed in the last 100 years. It is still married to a 50-minute lecture session three days a week in the so-called Socratic method. Weeks are collected in semester segments which conveniently divide the learning year in three neat time periods—two for learning and one for earning money. Then, into this structure we seek to compress education of specialists in the practice of a profession.

### *The Inadequacy of the Professional Monopoly*

Part of the catechism which the professional in law learns is that there are certain tasks which only the professional is equipped to handle. Of course, the profession of the ministry makes similar monopolistic claims. The professions have staked out a territory within which only the duly licensed may practice, because it is argued that the practice of the profession in this territory requires specialized training in a school of high-

er learning, commitment to serve in the rendition of these professional tasks, peer evaluation of professional performance, organization of the professionals as a source of fraternity and market place for new ideas, and the attitude that these norms are in accord with the true nature of reality.

However, the nature of the reality which is now being unveiled is that a lesson needs to be learned from the medical profession which has permitted and exerted subtle control over the development of a whole battery of para-professionals in the practice of medicine, from the nurse in the operating room to the technician in the laboratory. In contrast, lawyers have not been prone to open the doors of their inner sanctum to anyone who is less than totally initiated into the ranks by means of education, emotional commitment, and the completion of the other specified rites of passage into the profession.

Without debating the desirability of a profession to control and limit the entrance of neophytes into its ranks, the pressing need for professional services in today's world strains the maintenance of the professional monopoly. There is little data concerning the nature and extent of these needs. Figures comparing the number of professionals per a particular population are not altogether satisfactory, mainly because they do not reflect the change in type or nature of services which are rendered or expected of a particular profession. And although it is possible to conceive that a profession may become obsolete, it is difficult to accept that proposition in the case of law and religion, unless one of these professions becomes totally unresponsive to the needs of contemporary man in his finite social relations.

But, in the face of apparent increasing people needs for professional services, the attempt to maintain a professional monopoly over the services traditionally performed by a professional will only cause other occupations to rise to render services necessary to meet these needs. It has happened with lawyers and the rise of title examiners. It may also have happened with the church and the rise of the mortuary chapel. Loss of business, or whatever else may be the reason, has awakened the legal profession to the need to include within its circumference of responsibility the training of paraprofessionals in law—people who are trained to perform legal tasks but do not need the imprimatur of the J.D. degree in order to do them.

In a real sense, the recognition of the D.C.E.—the Director of Christian Education—by the clergy, and the incorporation of education toward the M.R.E. degree within the theological curriculum, exemplify the development of recognizing and creating slots for paraprofessionals within a profession. The Director of Christian Education does not enjoy the status or prestige of the B.D. (now M. Div.) degree holder, nor the power of decision making in the tribunals of the profession. The D.C.E. is under the supervision of the clergy within the work context in which religious services are rendered. And yet, the D.C.E. has a certain amount of autonomy in the rendition of those services.

However, just as one robin does not make it spring, the recognition of one paraprofessional does not constitute the solution of this problem. Indeed, William P. Thompson, in his dedicatory address of Princeton's new Erdman

Hall, spoke of the need to provide specialized learning for laymen who will then be enabled to aid in making things happen in the congregations and in the communities where they reside. These laymen could well be the prototype of the paraprofessional in the ministry.

As if there are not tensions enough in professional education, the care and feeding of paraprofessionals raises an additional battery of issues, at least in legal education. For although the scene may change dramatically depending upon the response of the law schools, to date they have made the greater effort toward developing curricula and providing training for paraprofessionals in law. Impetus for such training is now taking form within the profession itself in communication with the law schools. However, these efforts are still quite preliminary, and it yet remains to be seen how the education of paraprofessionals will be encompassed, if at all, with the tradition of legal education. One fact of interest is that the revelation of curricula for paraprofessional training to law school students has whetted their appetites for the opportunity to take some of the courses, which suggests that paraprofessional education may be the opportunity to meld the theoretical and practical in professional education in a new format.

### *Undergraduate Professional Education*

An ancillary and very exploratory response to recognizing the need for educating paraprofessionals within the accepted professions is the growing awareness that there is no need to wait until a person has received his baccalaureate degree *before* he can be introduced to the mysteries of professional lore. Thus, in the case of law, consideration is be-



ing given to the introduction of law courses in undergraduate education. Training of paraprofessionals in law could thereby be facilitated, and with some coordination between the pre-professional and the professional schools, the content of professional education might be either buttressed or shortened or both.

To be sure, the theological educational enterprise has already been confronted with this development, as during the last twenty years, religion departments gained in popular demand in colleges of letters and sciences across the land. Perhaps the initial stage of debate in this encounter concerning religious education in a supposedly neutral context has been passed, and the relation between teaching religion in seminary and non-seminary contexts has reached Phase II. Be that as it may, it is instructive to note that whereas in the past a majority of admittees into Presbyterian theological seminaries came from church-related colleges, now the majority seem to come from state schools, chiefly with a campus ministry. (Of course, this fact may merely reflect the limited student population of church-related colleges in relation to the student population of state schools.) Something is happening by way of a feeder operation in relation to the teaching of religion at the undergraduate level.

This experience in theological education at least suggests that no longer can professional education be treated as though it can begin only after the completion of an undergraduate education. Rather, there may be opportunity for cooperation in the education of paraprofessionals and professionals alike, plus the added ingredient of establishing a broader base of knowledge in connec-

tion with such fundamental aspects of social living as law and religion. But, whatever this potential may be, its parameters have yet to be explored and lined out from the perspective of professional education.

### *The Requirements of Competence*

The fourth frontier of professional life which raises questions for the education of professionals is the requirement of professional competence—or at least the expectation that professionals will be competent in the rendition of their services. It usually comes as a surprise to laymen to learn that there has been no explicit professional requirement that lawyers be competent until 1969 when the American Bar Association adopted a new Code of Professional Responsibility. Canon 6 of that Code now specifies that "A Lawyer Should Represent a Client Competently." Late in coming as this requirement for competency in the legal profession might be, a person in the pew would search in vain for a similar requirement for his clergyman.

And because of the novelty of this expectation within the profession of lawyers, the requisites of competency have not yet been spelled out. Rather, as of now, competency is a state of being which everyone can identify when he sees it, but the requirements of which have not been delineated. However, even in this absence of definition, generally it is recognized that continued competency of the professional requires, at the minimum, continuing education of the professional. Current attempts at continuing legal education have fallen short of the expected mark in fulfilling the need to update and upgrade the professional. As Robert B. Yegge, Dean of

the University of Denver College of Law has observed:

There is a tendency of current CLE programs to be conveniently presented through the lecture system to a tiny fraction of the potential audience, which attendance is inevitably restricted by pre-eminent demands of family and livelihood. And, too often, the courses are taken less seriously than their outdated predecessors of law school days.<sup>1</sup>

One thing seems certain: continuing professional education which is merely more of the same 50-minute lecture in the same hallowed old ivy halls will not meet the needs for maintaining the competence of the professional. The challenge is for new forms of packaging continuing education of the professional in many contexts, including on-the-job consumption. Service to the student needs to be the key principle to guide the design of continuing education in the profession, and not convenience of faculty and present facilities. The professional needs

to be conceived as a continuing student whose continual education is as important to the profession as that which enabled him to enter that profession. And just as he had an identity in relation to an institution which educated him to enter the profession, so he needs an identity with an institution which continues his professional education.

Accordingly, in meeting this challenge, new institutions may have to be developed (see Yegge, *id.*), hopefully by current professional schools but with close cooperation with professionals and their organizations. Continuing professional education will have to come into its own with the same seriousness now given to professional education. There are advantages in maintaining an adjunct relation with the institutions of professional education. But the days of the piggy-back ride seem numbered if we are to keep professionals in tune with the times. The role of the institutions of higher professional education in this process of continuing education of the professional has yet to be defined.

<sup>1</sup> Robert B. Yegge, *CLE Tomorrow: Some Thoughts for Discussion* (Mimeo, 1971).

## THROUGH CROSS TO LIFE

Eternal life is the greatest blessing Easter brings and, according to our Reformed tradition, it is a gift of God's grace. Yet there is a sense in which it is also earned by those who realize and possess it. No one would appreciate or relish eternal life unless he had first gone through the process of losing his in order to find it. Easter means that real life—eternal life—is a by-product of a partnership with the Son of God. And the joy that was his can become ours only if we do not attempt to by-pass or eliminate the Cross, but pass through it to the very life of God. Hence the truest symbol of our faith is a Cross encircled by a Crown. Only a shallow Christian thinks that his annual salute to Easter Day is a passport to eternal life. All genuine Christians share the Easter joy in full measure because they do not close their eyes to the uplifted Cross, but see it transformed and glorified by the blazing light of Christ's victory.

—Donald Macleod, in *Higher Reaches*, Epworth Press, 1971, p. 125.

## Review—Article\*

by S T KIMBROUGH

Formerly a member of the Princeton faculty in the Department of Biblical Studies, Dr. Kimbrough is also a widely recognized professional musician and is serving now as European Executive Secretary for Christian Arts, Inc., with headquarters in Bonn, Germany.

A native of Birmingham, Alabama, Dr. Kimbrough is a graduate of Duke University Divinity School and received the Th.D. degree from Princeton in 1966.

THROUGHOUT the works of Bonhoeffer there are traces of his interest in and dependence upon the Old Testament for the development of his theology. More than mere incidental or occasional references to the Old Testament, they indicate the author's conscious participation in the new theological consideration of the Old Testament in the first half of the twentieth century. Furthermore, there are occasions, such as in *Widerstand und Ergebung*, where his Old Testament hermeneutic is more fully developed with clarity and perception.

Bonhoeffer is not known *per se* as an Old Testament specialist, and certainly it is the more revolutionary and popular aspects of his theology that have captivated his readers and students. Nevertheless, Martin Kuske, who has immersed himself in Bonhoeffer's work and found the importance of the Old Testament to be a guiding force, has been motivated to produce the study entitled, *Das Alte Testament als Buch von Christus*. Kuske realizes that often Bonhoeffer's Old Testament interpretation has been unjustly set alongside the christological interpretation of Wilhelm

Vischer as being of like mind. In addition to combing Bonhoeffer's works for his Old Testament perspective and setting the same in the context of Bonhoeffer's writings, as well as the scholarship of his period (to some extent the question of the social location of knowledge is developed with regard to Bonhoeffer), Kuske in fact shows that Bonhoeffer interpreted the Old Testament as the "book of Christ" in a way quite opposite to Vischer.

The author has drawn from Bonhoeffer's sermons, sermon outlines, Bible studies, devotions, devotional aids, occasional speeches, meditations, exegeses, letters, poems, a series of lectures, a confirmation teaching plan, an address, an "Introduction to the Psalms," and a confession. There are also references to almost all of the major works of Bonhoeffer. All these materials are carefully scrutinized by the author in order to form a kernel view of Bonhoeffer's Old Testament interpretation. Kuske is extremely sensitive to the fact that these various sources have very different *Sitz im Leben* and he attempts to keep them within their context and does so by a wise use of footnotes.

Before treating Bonhoeffer's basic position on the scripture, Kuske devotes Chapter One to a résumé of the confrontation of Bonhoeffer and certain

\**Das Alte Testament als Buch von Christus*: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Wertung und Auslegung des Alten Testaments, by Martin Kuske. Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1970.

continental theologians (A. Harnack, R. Seeberg, E. Seelin, F. Baumgaertel, K. Barth, and W. Vischer), who were influential in contributing to the moulding of his biblical position. Such a background is the *raison d'être* for Chapter Two, which discusses Bonhoeffer's essential appraisal of the Bible. Again, as in Chapter One, Bonhoeffer's views are set within their particular period of development, so that there is no scissors and paste pulling out of quotations without relating them to the man, his time and theology, as well as the historical and theological *milieu* within which he functioned.

The larger framework of Bonhoeffer's view of sculpture is sketched so that his view of the Old Testament may be seen within it. In the four sections of Chapter Two it becomes apparent that Bonhoeffer is bound to the scripture and the message of the Bible is the message of the cross. This is the matrix of his interpretative perspective for the Bible as a whole. The Bible is the book of the church (the church under the cross) with the witness of one God who in Jesus Christ loves the world.

Chapter Three is the core chapter of the volume. Here Kuske develops the theme of the book: the Old Testament as the book of Christ. His method is one which procedurally overlaps a chronological and objective approach. Following Bethge, Kuske shares the opinion that Bonhoeffer addressed himself to particular themes at certain periods of his life and within these one finds a development of his views on the Old Testament. He saw it constantly as the book of Christ, but Kuske illustrates in this chapter how he said it in different ways. There are numerous quotes from Bonhoeffer included which

allow him to say what he had to say without a strained effort at systematizing everything into "Bonhoeffer's Old Testament theology." Yet, Kuske's arrangement keeps them from standing alone and unrelated to one another. His continued, excellent use of footnoting for the running commentary of the theological climate as well as contemporary evaluation of Bonhoeffer proves helpful to the work as a whole and to the reader.

The first half of Chapter Three discusses Bonhoeffer's own "christological" interpretation of the Old Testament, which moves in two directions—from Christ to the Old Testament and from the Old Testament to the New Testament. Here he shares in what H. W. Wolff, W. Zimmerli, A. Jepsen, and G. von Rad have also asserted on Old Testament interpretation. In addition, there is not only a double-direction hermeneutical principle, but Bonhoeffer's use of the formula "Christ in the Old Testament" is explained.

There follows in this chapter, reference to selections from Bonhoeffer which deal directly with Old Testament passages, e.g., Gen. 1:1 (in which all the interpretative elements mentioned above appear to be present), 2 Sam. 11-19, and the Song of Songs. Bonhoeffer claimed that the Old Testament must be read from the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection; that is, the revelation which has occurred. If not, one remains in the Jewish or heathen understanding of the Old Testament. Kuske states this position tersely and clearly and helps one to see how Bonhoeffer read the Old Testament from such a perspective.

The phrase, "Christ in the Old Testament," of Bonhoeffer is subsequently



explored. Kuske finds the judgments of C. Westermann, W. Rupprecht, and H. Pfeiffer—that Bonhoeffer interpreted the Old Testament directly and strictly from a christological standpoint—much too narrow a criticism. He supports this view as he develops Bonhoeffer's position from a lecture entitled, "Christ in the Psalms," a Bible study on the restoration of Jerusalem according to Ezra and Nehemiah, and a sermon on Psalm 58. In the following discussion such important concepts in Bonhoeffer as the "real presence" and the "personal presence" are treated. Once more the response of many theologians to Bonhoeffer, as well as Kuske's own, are appropriately used to sharpen and clarify Bonhoeffer's position.

With the assertion of the personal presence of Christ in the Old Testament in the phrase, "Christ was in David," Bonhoeffer had certainly moved beyond the mere concept of the real presence of Christ in the Old Testament. The question of whether he surrendered the Old Testament thereby comes to the surface. If one means the Old Testament as object of historical-critical research *per se*, perhaps Yes. Kuske replies, however, No. To the contrary, there occurs the conquering of the Old Testament for the church—the discovering of it as the book of the wandering people of God, which through worship and justice is underway in the world and through which the voice of God (the living God) may be heard and received.

The phrase, "Christ in the Old Testament," in the light of the sermon on Psalm 58 suggests that Bonhoeffer had moved even another step beyond the personal presence. Namely, the understanding of the Old Testament from

the standpoint of Christ leads to the knowledge that it is from Christ for us made valid and belongs to him. Nothing stands outside this, for in Christ the entire Old Testament is fulfilled.

The last half of the chapter is devoted to the subject of the New Testament from the perspective of the Old Testament. Here some key words and phrases from Bonhoeffer such as, "How do we speak worldly of God," the "actuality" of the Old Testament, etc., enter the discussion as Kuske follows the development of the influence of the Old Testament on Bonhoeffer's theology. Drawing from his letters and works it becomes clear that Bonhoeffer's world view was largely shaped by the Old Testament. He saw man living within reality as the Old Testament presented it.

Kuske has succeeded in letting Bonhoeffer speak from his works in this section and thus enter into conversation with Baumgaertel, Brunner, Barth, and others so that his view of the New Testament from the perspective of the Old is not stagnant.

By no means does Bonhoeffer view the Old Testament as the mere counterpart of the New, rather the presupposition of the New through which it comes to a relevant interpretation of the Old Testament message. The Old Testament has a growing importance for Bonhoeffer which is reflected in his New Testament interpretation as well, and Kuske has included examples of the same in this chapter.

Finally, Kuske addresses himself to the contribution of the Old Testament to the understanding of Bonhoeffer's statement on "the world come of age." In this concluding chapter he moves into the arena of what there is in Bon-

hoeffer's Old Testament interpretation that is valid for men today. He has drawn the lines clearly throughout his work so that Bonhoeffer neither can be placed in the camp of F. Baumgaertel, R. Bultmann, and F. Hesse who tend to devalue the Old Testament, nor in that of A. van Ruler who tends to overvalue it. Rather, for Bonhoeffer both testaments (as with G. von Rad, H. W. Wolff, and W. Zimmerli) are of practically the same value, since both witness to Christ. From this basic position, Kuske approaches the question—can the Old Testament lead to a better understanding of the last theological thoughts of Bonhoeffer? His answer is, Yes; and through further analysis of Bonhoeffer's materials supports this position effectively. The pros and cons of Bonhoeffer's views are thoroughly considered, as for example his differences with H. Schmidt.

It is Kuske's goal in a major portion of the chapter to understand Bonhoeffer's phrase "the world come of age" in correspondence to the Old Testament message of justice. In this regard the writer suggests that Bonhoeffer is much more influenced by the Old Testament prophets than is often recognized. Although Kuske might have developed this assertion more thoroughly, it is clear that Bonhoeffer himself in a few places recognized that his thoughts on "non-religious interpretation" were rooted in the Old Testament.

Kuske has elucidated the "tension"

hermeneutic which exists in Bonhoeffer's interpretation of the scripture—the "reciprocal" movement within it as a whole between the Old Testament and the New. And he has shown that it *is actually* a reciprocal movement. Furthermore, it is here that his christological interpretation is profitable for, rather than a hindrance to, an understanding of the Old Testament.

There are also some valuable implications in this work for the life of the contemporary church, since Kuske has set Bonhoeffer's thought in the context of its development. Most suggestive especially are Bonhoeffer's interpretative comments addressed to social justice. Here there may be implications to be drawn on the importance of the Old Testament for the church as it faces the question of social justice in the present, since Bonhoeffer had found the Old Testament such a great resource at this point.

The method of citing sources includes a rather confusing system of abbreviations and the table of contents does not reflect uniformity throughout. Greatly needed are indexes for scripture references and authors.

Kuske's work is an essential volume in the long line of material reflecting the growing and sustained interest in and importance of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, especially since it is the first study which treats extensively Bonhoeffer's Old Testament interpretation.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Power to Be Human: Toward a Secular Theology*, by Charles C. West. Macmillan & Co., New York, N.Y., 1971. Pp. 270. \$7.95.

Charles West is as discerning an interpreter of the ecumenical Christian scene as anyone writing about it these days. As an American with profound experiences in China and Europe, he has acquired a sensitivity to a variety of patterns of thought. More than most interpreters he avoids the dogmatisms of culture-bound partisans who cannot understand ideas and feelings alien to their own. Where others absolutize the insights that are self-evident to their own cultures (or alienated sub-cultures), he sees the "awful relativity of our erstwhile universals." He is the more effective because he makes no claims to transcend cultural prisons but insists that he, like everyone else, stands constantly in need of ecumenical conversation.

This sensitivity to others does not make West a neutral reporter. His interpretation of the judgments of others is—quite appropriately—grist for his own theological program. Thus in his writings he combines imaginative communication of diverse ideas with theological affirmations that he strongly wishes to contribute to the continuing dialogue.

In the contemporary world he sees a confrontation between two movements, technological humanism and revolutionary humanism. The two, he says, are so basically different that they face each other in "a tragicomedy of misunderstanding and mutual rejection." They met in a powerful and explicit interchange at the Geneva Conference on Church and Society, convened by the World Council of Churches in 1966. West analyzes that conference in considerable detail, relying on its documents and his personal experiences in it.

Technological humanism dominates the affluent and powerful world. It assumes that human problems have answers, and it advocates evolutionary change. It has made immense achievements, but now is awed by problems coming out of its own successes.

The old confidence in progress has been chastened by war, poverty, and other social ills. Technological man is losing confidence in himself as "a personal deciding center in this world." He is polytheistic, but his gods ("the powers of Nature, Reason, Economics, Science, History, Evolution, Democracy, Individual Freedom, and Technology itself") have turned silent, leaving him perplexed.

Revolutionary humanism arises among those social groups who feel dehumanized by powers they do not control. Its classic prophet was Marx. But its present advocates are not European Marxists, who have become virtual technological humanists. Its home is the alienated third world, resentful of exploitation by both socialists and capitalists. It rejects all gods who represent oppressive power. "For the revolutionaries the one god who was a projection of their own hopes and dreams—universal man expressed in the solidarity of the struggling people—has been reduced to the elusive hope that he may one day appear."

Thus both movements contribute to a radical secularization in which all the gods are silent or absent. "The real *oikoumene* is a confrontation in which all conclusions are turned into questions and all human-built foundations, including human ideas about divine things, are undermined." All "ultimate structures, values, and methods themselves are dead." In this threatening world people must ask whether there is any truth that is more than the ideology of groups seeking to dominate others.

When a theologian writes like that, he puts us on guard against his own affirmations. Will he simply try to reinstate the old Christian declarations that have, by his own reasoning, been undermined? Can he, after pronouncing the death of all gods, still talk convincingly about God? West believes that he can—that, indeed, he can talk about the biblical God, the living Father, the triune God. But, he says, the church recognizes this God in "world events which call the Church in question."

The God of Christian faith, then, can never be the guarantor of any order or absolute structure of reality—either of established orders or of revolutionary expectations. This

God has his very being *in relation*. Men can know him only in *metanoia* and commitment. Truth is not a given structure that we simply accept. It is "a form of response to and action in the changing human relations where man is placed." Hence man is called to "creative ideologizing" in which truth serves a purpose. Knowing all the hazards of that enterprise, West asks how we can distinguish truth from the projections of personal or group interests. His answer is: "Our concepts of truth are changed and renewed by interaction with the object of our knowledge which confronts us through the stimulating mystery of a personal relation, in which we are judged and transformed." Such knowledge means participation in "the suffering and death of Christ."

What does such language mean for life in the conflicts of the secular world? The Christian will enter into the world's conflicts, not seeking to protect himself in privilege or in guiltless purity. He will use power, perhaps violent revolutionary power, for the sake of justice and peace. He will constantly remember that the aim of every struggle is "transforming reconciliation." The church will thus say both a Yes and a No to technological humanists and revolutionary humanists alike, because it will testify to the forgiving, transforming power by which people become human.

This is an ambitious book, encompassing a critique of contemporary culture, a theology, an ethic, a theory of knowledge, and an analysis of ecumenical Christian discussions. It is a book that both in style and content makes heavy demands on the reader—occasionally heavier than necessary, I think. But it is a rewarding book and a worthy contribution to the ecumenical dialogue.

ROGER L. SHINN

Union Theological Seminary  
New York, N.Y.

*What the Religious Revolutionaries Are Saying*, ed. by Elwyn A. Smith. Fortress Press, Philadelphia, Penna., 1971. Pp. 153. \$2.95.

This little paperback reminds one of a sidewalk art display in Greenwich Village. Twelve writers, who have in common only the claim to belong in some way to the Chris-

tian (and one Jewish) Left, each presents his thing. No attempt is made at order. Thematic permissiveness is the rule. But the result is well worth an afternoon's ramble through the exhibition. There is some dull stuff, but there are also some gems.

Readers will differ, of course, as to what grabs them and there is something for almost everyone here. Defense of abortion; the religious meaning of psychedelic drugs; communes as an alternative to the Church; denunciations of the police, the university, and religious tax benefits; Black Power; Jewish community—it is all there. But for this reviewer the spirit seems to move most in the efforts of four writers to project a theological style for living in a world where all the old landmarks have disappeared. John Fry, of *Fire and Blackstone* fame, is least articulate and most prophetic. Fry does not analyze, he rages, but there is something in his rage which defines the judgment and the promise of God on the modern city. Richard Shaull seeks a new form of missionary Christian community outside the present institutions of church and world which will transform the exploitative paternal relations between America and the Third World into a new affirmation of the latter's liberation. Richard Snyder and Joseph Williamson introduce and conclude the book with somewhat differing styles of the theological reflection and action for the Counter-Culture which is trying to change things.

To return to the art gallery simile, can any of these pictures be hung in a local parish? I believe they can if one first knocks off the negative anti-institutional frame which the authors put around them. The ideal Christian community is as much of an illusion on the fragmented Left as it is in our staid churches. But a ferment is at work in the whole Church and some of its bubble, its odor and its seethe are in this little volume.

CHARLES C. WEST

*The Russian Orthodox Church Underground 1917-1970*, by William C. Fletcher. Oxford University Press, New York, N.Y., 1971. Pp. 324. \$12.00.

There is probably no more important task for the American people in world affairs than to understand the people of Soviet Russia



more deeply. There is probably no more important work for American Christians in the ecumenical movement than to penetrate the mind and spirit of Russian Orthodoxy. Yet, in both cases, few tasks are more baffling and difficult.

This is the second of William C. Fletcher's expeditions into this field. His first, *The Struggle for Survival*, dealt with the official policies and actions of the Russian Orthodox Church from the time of the Revolution. The present book supplies the other part of the picture. It is a study of what happens when the deep liturgical piety of Orthodox Christianity is driven underground by the closing of churches and monasteries, by state subversion of the official church and by outright persecution of Christians. The story reads strangely to Protestant ears. One is tempted at times to share Soviet writers' disgust and even horror at some of its fanatic extremes. But it is also both an encouragement and a warning to those of us who live where it is comfortable to be Christian. The church is capable of living on many levels, both of organization and spiritual insight. When it is crushed, hounded, its leaders systematically imprisoned and its literature proscribed, it becomes indeed less enlightened but it does not die. The Spirit works through partial, broken and sometimes distorted forms, through people for whom, however they perceive him, Christ is life and all else is secondary, until the political powers relent and the church can grow together again.

This is the story Fletcher tells. The heart of the book is in the chapters on the "years of the red dragon" before the second world war and on the rejuvenation and strengthening of the church in Stalin's prison camps. It is a story which can only now be told. Hitherto, we have had only hearsay accounts from refugees. Recently Soviet atheist scholars have themselves confirmed much that was hitherto suspect as anti-Soviet exaggeration. Fletcher uses both kinds of sources in his book and weaves them together.

In short, one ought to read this book if one cares about fellow Christians in the vastness of Russia. In doing so, however, one should be aware that it has three drawbacks. First, Fletcher sticks so close to his sources that at times he seems to reflect their bias. This is especially evident when he is describing some of the extremes of "true Orthodox

Christianity" as taken from Soviet atheist scholarly propaganda. Part of the purpose of such propaganda is to spread lurid and repulsive stories about illegal (i.e., non-government registered) Christianity. Such stories should not be taken quite as much at face value as Fletcher sometimes tends to do.

Second, the book leaves out one of the most important and encouraging developments in recent Russian intellectual life: the growth of a vigorous Christian *samizdat* (privately and illegally circulated) literature among the intellectuals who for all their present powerlessness hold the promise of Russia's future in their minds. There is a curious dichotomy in Russia between intellectuals and the common people. Both have their forms of protest, usually not interacting with each other. But Christianity is on both sides of this division.

Finally, there is the price of the book. One shudders and hesitates in recommending it on this ground alone. Some will buy it because of a long and overpowering interest in Russia and things Russian. But it is the kind of material that should be available in every town where a church has to contend with American forms of obscurantism about Russia and things Russian. One can only hope that church contributions and ministerial salaries will rise to meet the challenge or that the publisher will relent.

CHARLES C. WEST

*Free Will and Determinism*, by R. L. Franklin. Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., London, and Humanities Press, New York, N.Y., 1968. Pp. x + 346. \$8.00.

The issue of free will is such a large and important one in Christianity, both of the past and present, so vital to ethics and politics, and yet so difficult that help from any source is always to be welcomed. This book is such a source, even though it makes no explicit reference to theology but is rather the work of a very able Australian philosopher. It is a remarkable book, since unlike the piecemeal work done today and for over a generation in English-speaking philosophy, it is a treatise, brilliantly analyzing every conceivable argument *pro* and *con* on the subject, jam-packed with fine summaries of positions and exponents' defenses of their po-

sitions, and yet through it all, concerned with the broad issue of rival conceptions of man and able to present its own position with rigorous arguments to support it. In short, you have close reasoning, completeness, synoptic vision, and originality.

It is hard work to read it, but the subject is hard work; and it is about time that theologians and divinity students once again accepted the fact that this is the only way to do business.

DIOGENES ALLEN

*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. by Gerhard Friedrich; trans. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. VII. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1971. Pp. xiv + 1104. \$25.00.

The seventh volume of the Kittel-Friedrich theological dictionary of the New Testament, the Preface of which in the original German edition is dated 1964, has now appeared in English. The indefatigable translator, Professor G. W. Bromiley of Fuller Theological Seminary, deserves the gratitude of all English readers who are unable to profit from consulting the original German.

The format, familiar from previous volumes, provides a survey of the usage of a given New Testament word in pre-Christian authors, both classical and Old Testament, followed by a thorough discussion of the chief nuances of meaning in the several New Testament authors who use the word, often concluding with a brief indication of the usage in the early church Fathers.

In the Preface the German editor makes some reference to the debate aroused by James Barr's critique of earlier volumes of the dictionary. While tacitly acknowledging that some articles in earlier volumes drew far-reaching theological conclusions from the etymology of the word (this was one of Barr's chief criticisms), Friedrich rejects other objections raised by Barr, and comments: "If publishing a Dictionary entails much labour, it has its humorous side when articles which theologians dismiss as complete failures receive the highest praise from philologists, or articles which are subjected to the sharpest criticism by philologists are

extolled as most significant by theologians."

Among the longer articles of words beginning with *sigma* in this volume (several are more than fifty pages in length) mention may be made of those on "flesh," "sign," "Sion," "crown," "synagogue," "salvation," and "body." It is difficult to think of a more useful tool for the student of the Greek New Testament. Among Biblical studies of this generation the Kittel-Friedrich dictionary is one of the very few that deserves the epithets "monumental" and "indispensable."

BRUCE M. METZGER

*The Westminster Dictionary of Church History*, ed. by Jerald C. Brauer. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Penna., 1971. Pp. xii + 887. \$17.50.

The object of this Dictionary of Church History has been thus stated by its general editor, Dr. Jerald C. Brauer of the University of Chicago: "to give an immediate, accurate, introductory definition and explanation concerning the major men, events, facts, and movements in the history of Christianity" (p. v).

The guidelines which have governed the compilation of this volume are as follows. The institutional Christian church is its primary center of reference; but because of the interplay between Christianity and Western civilization, entries have been made for such areas as the arts, politics and philosophy. Few Biblical materials have been included, since the Dictionary takes over where the Bible leaves off. The whole span of church history has, of course, been covered; but special emphasis has been laid on the modern period, i.e., from 1700 on; and American developments have been particularly—indeed, disproportionately—stressed, since the Dictionary has been designed primarily for an American readership. Articles have been kept intentionally brief, covering ten, thirty or one hundred lines; but major movements, such as the Protestant Reformation, have been given two hundred lines. Bibliographical references have been appended only to the longer articles—i.e., those which run to one hundred or two hundred lines. Every attempt has been made to avoid special pleading; hence the articles seek primarily to confine themselves to the

facts, and where interpretation cannot be avoided, differing viewpoints have been suggested.

In such a large, comprehensive and multi-authored volume as this, it was almost inevitable that a few errors should creep in; and this has happened. For example, Phillips Brooks was Episcopal Bishop of Massachusetts, not of New York (p. 133); P. T. Forsyth studied with Albrecht Ritschl, but in Göttingen, Germany, not at Hackney College, London (p. 333); and Ernst Troeltsch's classical work on *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches* first appeared in 1912, not 1923, though it was not translated into English until 1931 (p. 830).

In a compilation of this sort, questions may properly be raised concerning its inclusions and exclusions. On the American scene, for example, it was no doubt legitimate to include S. Parkes Cadman, but if so, Henry Sloane Coffin should not have been omitted; and it is difficult to see why Andrew Carnegie, who was no glutton for organized religion in any form, should have been mentioned, while John D. Rockefeller, an ardent Baptist, was left out. Again, an English Free Churchman will welcome the articles on C. H. Spurgeon, Alexander Maclaren, Hugh Price Hughes, P. T. Forsyth and Reginald J. Campbell, but he will wonder about the absence of R. W. Dale, John H. Jowett, C. H. Dodd and Leslie D. Weatherhead. A Scotsman of the Established Church tradition will be happy to read about John Caird and George Matheson; but he will wish that Robert Flint, W. P. Paterson and John White had been included also. If he is of United Free Church background, he will be glad to see entries on Thomas Chalmers, W. Robertson Smith and George Adam Smith, and James Moffatt; but he will be surprised and sorry at the absence of Robert Rainy, A. B. Davidson—the eminent Old Testament scholar who taught both Smiths—James Denney, A. B. Bruce and T. M. Lindsay, Moffatt's distinguished predecessor in the chair of Church History at the Glasgow United Free—now Trinity—College.

Such questions aside, however, it must be reported that the Dictionary describes with accuracy and succinctness many of the most significant men and movements in the strange eventful history of the Christian church; and, though doubtless only God can be complete-

ly objective, the book has succeeded in avoiding any obvious bias or partiality. It should prove to be a useful work of reference, particularly in America.

NORMAN V. HOPE

*Memories and Meanings*, by W. R. Matthews. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., London, England, 1969. Pp. 413. 63s.

Outside the ranks of the episcopate, one of the most distinguished of present day Church of England clergymen is Dr. W. R. Matthews. Educated at King's College, London, during World War I he served as a parish priest in London. In 1918 he became Dean and Professor of Theology at King's College, his alma mater. In 1932 he went to Exeter as Dean of the Cathedral, and three years later returned to his native London as Dean of St. Paul's, the mother church of the diocese—a position in which his predecessors included such celebrities as John Colet, John Donne, H. L. Mansel, Richard W. Church and W. R. Inge. When Matthews retired in 1967, he was appointed Dean Emeritus. He has employed some of his retirement leisure in writing this autobiography.

Dr. Matthews is a theological thinker of considerable importance, seeking to make the eternal Christian gospel meaningful and relevant to Twentieth Century man. The late A. E. Garvie, eminent Congregationalist theologian, declared that he "set a high value on his (Matthews') contributions to theological and philosophical thought" (*Memories and Meanings of My Life*, pp. 213-214). This autobiography, however, says little about this aspect of Matthews' activity. It speaks about his family life, of course, particularly his happy marriage to a lady whom he describes as a "reverent agnostic," and of his deep grief at the death of his brilliant and promising son at Dunkirk in 1940, which he describes as "the great sorrow of our lives, an event after which nothing was the same again" (p. 248).

The book deals chiefly with Matthews' public life, and particularly his work at King's College, London, and St. Paul's Cathedral, the two places where he labored longer than anywhere else. During his fourteen years at King's College, his main endeavor was "to make the theological faculty of



King's College renowned as a great center of Christian thought" (p. 153). In this he certainly succeeded in some measure—for example, he persuaded Charles Gore to join the faculty after his (Gore's) retirement from the bishopric of Oxford in 1919.

The bulk of the book concentrates on its author's thirty-two years as Dean of St. Paul's. When he was appointed, both the Prime Minister (Ramsay MacDonald) and the Archbishop of Canterbury (Cosmo Gordon Lang) indicated that they expected him "to bring, or cause to be brought, new life into the Cathedral" (pp. 184-185). Clearly, Matthews did much to ensure that St. Paul's would make a deep impact on the church people of London, and even beyond. For one thing, he persuaded H.R.L. (Dick) Sheppard, one of the most popular Church of England clergymen and one of the best religious broadcasters, to become a Canon of St. Paul's. He himself preached regularly and well, in such fashion as to appeal to a wider constituency than his brilliant although somewhat academic predecessor, W. R. Inge. He sponsored many new kinds of service in St. Paul's—for example, one for the Salvation Army in 1941 to celebrate the centenary of the conversion of William Booth, its founder. And he presided with much dignity and impressiveness on such public occasions as the thanksgiving for victory in 1945 and the funeral of Sir Winston Churchill in 1965.

As is well known, St. Paul's was badly damaged during the blitz of 1940-41, despite the fact that all possible precautions had been taken to ensure its safety. After the war was over, it was restored and reconstructed, an enterprise which took fourteen years. Dr. Matthews, as Dean, was intimately involved in this project, and his book contains a full account of it.

One thing which stands out in this book is the author's frankness. He is candid about his supposed limitations. For example, he says he is glad he was never appointed a bishop, since he doesn't consider himself enough of a man of prayer for such a responsibility. He is frank also about the opposition he has encountered at many points in his public career. For instance, when he allowed the Salvation Army to hold its service in St. Paul's in 1941, he was called by Dr. G. L. Prestige, the well-known patristic scholar, "an ecclesiastical Quisling." He is also candid

in voicing his criticisms of the Church of England as he has known it during the past half-century. For instance, he thinks that after World War II the Anglican Church would have been wiser to reform its official teaching as set forth in the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion—those "forty stripes save one," as they have been called—rather than to concentrate on the revision of its Canon Law; and he is quite open about stating his preference for disestablishment of the Church of England. Such candor makes for interesting reading, so much so that the book is a colorful and instructive account of the Church of England during most of the present century by one who has served it faithfully, if not uncritically.

NORMAN V. HOPE

*The Constructive Revolutionary: John Calvin and His Socio-Economic Impact*, by W. Fred Graham. John Knox Press, Richmond, Va., 1971. Pp. 251. \$7.95.

John Calvin has rightly been considered to be one of the greatest of Christian theologians; even such a devout Roman Catholic as the historian Lord Acton could describe Calvin's *Institutes* as "the finest work of Reformation literature." In this book, Dr. W. Fred Graham contends that Calvin the social revolutionary was just as influential as, and indeed even more so than, Calvin the theologian, both by reason of his formal teaching and because of his effect on the practical politics of his adopted city of Geneva.

Graham ascribes Calvin's profound social influence to two factors. The first was his understanding of human society, and the place of the Christian church within it. That understanding was essentially this, that the Fall of man has broken the original tie of love and equality among men, but in Christ God has begun the restoration of right relations between men. And since the Church is the visible society of those who are united to one another in Jesus Christ, it must endeavor to see to it that life in community exhibits wholeness, justice and love. Graham puts it in this way, that the duty of the Consistory, which administered discipline in Calvin's Geneva, was mainly to admonish Christians to be Christian. The second reason for Calvin's



profound social influence was his willingness to rethink traditional Christian positions and policies in the economic realm, particularly with respect to the taking of interest. Medieval theologians, on the basis of Jesus Christ's saying, "Lend, expecting nothing in return" (Luke 6:35), and Aristotle's dictum that "money is barren," had developed the canonist law of usury, which forbade the taking of interest on money loaned. This prohibition, however, it is only fair to say, was frequently evaded in practice. But Calvin, living in sixteenth century Europe, in which commerce was rapidly expanding, took a favorable view of such business activity as a contribution to human well-being, and sought to release it from the artificial restraints which held it in. Therefore, he took a fresh look at the bases—biblical and Aristotelian—on which usury had been forbidden, and concluded that such prohibition was based on a misunderstanding. He contended that interest should be allowed for productive business purposes, though he sought so to hedge it about as to make it conform to the Christian law of love. Calvin's attitude has thus been stated, that he "raised the taking of interest to the same level of respectability as the taking of rent."

Not only did Calvin express such liberal views, but the city of Geneva—where he ultimately became virtually the Protestant Pope—enacted a quantity of social legislation considered appropriate for a Christian community. For example, in 1547 the city Council permitted interest to be taken up to five percent; and in 1557 this maximum was raised to six and two-thirds percent, with a frank recognition that five percent was not enough to induce possessors of money to lend it. Again, in 1559, on the demand of two city pastors, the Genevan Council passed legislation governing wages and conditions of work in the printing industry; this legislation has been described by Paul Chaix as "preserving the rights of the masters, [yet] obviously protecting the journeymen and apprentices" (quoted on p. 138).

There was, however, a bad side to such regulation in Calvin's Geneva. The regime tended to be harsh and dictatorial, paying too little respect to the rights of the individual. As Graham puts it, "In Geneva the tie that binds often turned out to be a noose; Christian discipline degenerated into pettiness,

foolishness, and even cruelty for the sake of the faithful, and in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (p. 176). He cites as an illustration the case of Jacques Gruet, who in 1547 was beheaded for blasphemy and rebellion. Graham finds the source of Calvin's dictatorial attitude in his Christology, in which "God has only hesitantly entered into the place of sinful man; he is only *somewhat* involved with the human process, with human presumption, pride, anger, stupidity, and ignorance—all of which received such short sympathy in Calvin's Geneva!" (p. 182). But surely a more plausible and obvious explanation is that of James Mackinnon, who contends that Calvin was the victim of his upbringing and environment, since the Roman Catholic Church in western Europe had for centuries displayed this tyrannical and inquisitorial attitude in relation to its constituents.

Graham is not the first to draw attention to Calvin's social and economic influence. For instance, R. H. Tawney analyzes it in his well-known *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*; and Georgia Harkness devotes attention to it in her book, *John Calvin: The Man and His Ethics*. But Graham presents a full-length study of this aspect of Calvin's activity, in a knowledgeable and well-balanced fashion. His important work deserves to be widely read, particularly in this age in which the question of the Church's desirable involvement in social, economic and political matters is being so keenly canvassed.

NORMAN V. HOPE

*Christendom Divided*, by Hans J. Hillerbrand. Corpus Publications, New York, N.Y., 1971. Pp. xiii + 344. \$9.95.

This is one of four volumes in the series entitled "Theological Resources," the other three dealing with historical theology, apologetics, and theology proper.

In form this book is a history of the Protestant Reformation and the Roman Catholic reaction as these movements developed in sixteenth century Europe; and as such it tells a clear and well-informed story. It offers, however, if not an original interpretation, at least a distinctive viewpoint, which helps to mark it off from many similar treatments of

the sixteenth century religious upheaval. This viewpoint may be described thus:

Dr. Hillerbrand is well aware that the Reformation movement was closely bound up with political factors and forces. Of course, there is nothing new in this; von Ranke, in the mid-nineteenth century, had also shown awareness of such factors. But whereas von Ranke tended to interpret politics mainly in terms of diplomacy, Hillerbrand more properly says that "the term 'politics' should include, in a broad definition, economic, cultural, and intellectual forces as well, for the course of the Reformation was intimately related to these elements" (p. xii). Therefore, for example, he devotes considerable space to a careful delineation of the interplay of religious and political factors in Germany between Luther's posting of his ninety-five theses in 1517 and the Augsburg Settlement of 1555. Nevertheless, Hillerbrand does not believe that the Reformation can be explained by such political factors; they did not constitute its primary motivation.

Nor does he believe that the Protestant movement can be accounted for on purely theological grounds. Some theological differences, of course, did exist, between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, for example, on the question of justification. But Hillerbrand, while recognizing the existence of such differences, contends that "a proper understanding of the inner momentum of the Reformation would relegate them to a secondary place" (p. 285).

The fundamental cause of the Protestant movement, in Hillerbrand's judgment, was religious. He states the matter thus: "One can understand the nature of the Reformation best by looking at the religious rather than theological emphases. . . . The Protestant Gospel was thus not so much a system of theological loci as a matter of spirituality. It was not so much an adamant call to ecclesiastical revolution as a concern for the entire Church" (p. 285). In thus interpreting the Reformation as a movement motivated primarily by religious concern, Hillerbrand is at one with such other recent interpreters as Roland H. Bainton and John T. McNeill.

Protestant historians have frequently tended to sum up the renewal of the religious life of the Roman Catholic Church in the later sixteenth century under the title "Counter-Reformation," thereby emphasizing its

character as a response to the Protestant challenge. Dr. Hillerbrand recognizes the importance of this Catholic response. But he rightly points out that the Roman Church developed an indigenous movement of renewal even before, and independent of, the Protestant challenge. Accordingly, he says that "some scholars have preferred as an alternate term 'Catholic Reform and Counter-Reformation' to emphasize the dual characteristic of 16th-century Catholic life, its indigenous self-renewal, and its reaction against the Protestant Reformation" (p. 270). And this term, he says, "deserves general acceptance" (ibid.).

All in all, this book by Dr. Hillerbrand presents a fresh and lively account of the important religious movements with which it deals, and deserves to be widely read.

NORMAN V. HOPE

*The Sleeping Giant: Arousing Church Power in America*, by Robert K. Hudnut. Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, N.Y., 1971. Pp. 164. \$5.95.

The Church exists to change the world and it ought to get on with it. Small and intimate, it is at the same time the biggest organization on earth, with world-wide meetings every week in nearly every city, town, and hamlet. It includes a third of the population and is richly endowed with intellectual, emotional and physical resources. It is called by its Founder to a life-style characterized by obedience, discipline, and sacrifice.

If a particular congregation does not fit this description, the time has come to get rid of the uncommitted by means of a rigorous discipline. Those who remain should study, share, and serve. The study will include courses and family projects and applied research in religion and its implications for such areas as business, politics, families, and international relations. The sharing will involve weekly worship with everybody present, honest and supportive small group relationships, and giving of time and money on a new scale. The serving must be both individual and corporate and include involvements which overcome the effects of injustice and establish justice. The Church's charter demands social action that is aggressive and divisive. A vote should be taken each Sunday

in every congregation on the most burning issue in the world that day with a subsequent report to political leaders, followed up by letters and visits. Task forces should go out to work for needed changes.

When Robert K. Hudnut writes about "Arousing Church Power in America" this is what he means, and his passion for righteousness hits the reader like a punchpress banging out a fender. Back of that blow is all the steam generated in an unusually sensitive and articulate human being who has been living out his vision in more than ten years of ministry. The wild horses of his impatience rear and stamp, but he harnesses the power for imaginative action. Hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of pastors will catch his vision and test his methods, while others will find ways to place the book in the hands of church officers. Chapter 4, which deals with fifteen objections to the Church's corporate participation in social action, will be a source for many faced with the current polemic against corporate involvement.

Despite a sharp, almost jagged, tone as the author deals with the shortcomings of the Church, this is a hopeful book, like his inspiring "Surprised by God" which dealt with ministry. As he looks ahead, he sees members leaving until only the committed are left. He anticipates an end to denominations but leaves an intriguing question as to whether this will come about through consultation at the national level or coalition in localities. He is sure people will gather for worship though it may take new forms, that the Bible will again be central, that members will learn to take more risks for love, and that young people will be attracted by a new relevance and urgency. Two of his prophecies seem particularly open to question: that the Church will have no buildings, and that the religious instruction of children will be entirely handled by parents. Both of these expectations are belied, for instance, by the experience of his former colleagues in the East Harlem Protestant Parish.

Hudnut's urgency leads him to insist on more authority for church administrators and less for local congregations. The brevity of the assertions leaves room for misunderstanding. The local congregation is a company of persons who must have a creative part in the design of their ministry or it will not happen. The frustration of leaders who cannot

lead is too often vented in a search for more compelling structures when the need is for more imaginative methods of motivation. This is borne out by the fact that men like Robert Hudnut lead substantial members into mission without a single power unavailable to their fellows.

Two chapters out of the seventeen in this volume deal specifically with the vertical element in religion. The result is a somewhat one-sided vision of the Church. Writes Jay G. Williams in the October, 1971 issue of *Theology Today*, "It is true that our political and social problems are monumental and need solution, but it may very well be that at their root is a deep spiritual crisis which makes any cleaning-up operations frustrating illusions. The truth is that we have lost touch with the depth of being and hence have become alienated from ourselves, from each other, and from the environment as a whole." Robert Hudnut gives evidence that he knows this and perhaps his next volume will redress the balance. In the meanwhile he confronts us with a persuasive brief for the Church as an agent of social change, occasionally extreme in demands and prescriptions, but never dull.

ARTHUR M. ADAMS

*The Shape of the Gospel: Interpreting the Bible through the Christian Year*, by Merrill R. Abbey. Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1971. Pp. 352. \$9.50.

This book carries a freight of thought and substance representative of many years of creating and collating sermonic materials for the Christian Year. Dr. Abbey, who is presently MacMurray Professor of Preaching at Garrett Theological Seminary, has produced a work of unique character and usefulness for men who take both the pulpit and the sequences of the Christian year seriously. The Preface indicates both the nature and method of the author's approach: "Through the Christian year successive Bible lessons trace the mighty acts of God which give shape to the gospel. . . . Following the ordered progression of these respective emphases, the Bible reader or worshipping congregation is led to a whole and balanced understanding of the faith" (p. 7). Although Dr. Abbey is dependent mainly



upon the lectionary of the United Methodist Church (1964), yet he is aware of overlaps with other denominations and has been careful to explore the resources these other traditions provide. Altogether 228 Bible passages are discussed according to the following procedure: (i) each lesson is related to its biblical context; (ii) the pericope is evaluated by its contribution to the progression of the drama of the Christian Year; and (iii) the message of the passage is held up so we can see ourselves by it and draw meaning from it.

This book is more than a homiletical scrapbook both in substance and method. The reader senses readily its comprehensiveness and rich variety as the products of both an inquiring and organizing mind. It is a peculiar blend of exegesis, liturgical sensitivity, and meaningful exposition. The writer indicates the breadth of his interests as he draws upon classical and contemporary literature and seems always to be mindful of Barth's oft quoted dictum: "The Christian studies with his Bible in one hand and today's newspaper in the other" (p. 8). Weak preachers will use this book as a crutch. Strong pulpit men will discover "thought starters" to open up new and exciting areas of their own.

DONALD MACLEOD

*First Christmas: The True and Unfamiliar Story*, by Paul L. Maier. Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, N.Y., 1971. Pp. 125. \$4.95.

This is a fresh piece of research which cannot help being of interest and use to every parish preacher. Most clergymen agonize over the problem of interpreting the Christian festivals year after year to the same congregation. Paul Maier, who is professor of history at Western Michigan University and whose father, Walter A., was preacher for the Lutheran Hour of international fame, has explored the historical background of Christ's birth and allows many new facts to re-tell the Christmas story. "For 2000 years the events surrounding the birth of Jesus have gripped the world's imagination. . . . Now Paul Maier strips away the layers of folklore which have obscured its famous beginning to tell 'how it really was' in the world of the

Nativity." The author's method has been to see the Christmas event against the background of history, geography, archaeology, and astronomy and thereby provide for us "interesting sidelights" Matthew and Luke do not include.

There are twelve brief chapters, each of which is prefaced by a verse from the Scripture account and accompanied by illustrations and color plates. Then, under such headings as "A Caesar's Census," "A Galilean Couple," "An Incredible Star," etc., Dr. Maier provides one interesting piece of information after another until the reader aches to visit the original sites or craves a congregation to which to tell more about "the greatest story ever told." Some critics will be unhappy over Maier's inclination seemingly to fortify the historicity of the Matthean and Lucan texts and the consequent implication that he mixes the elements of fact and faith. Maybe he does so to a degree, but any discriminative reader will profit from the manner in which these factors inform and correct each other.

Every church library should own a copy of this interesting monograph. Moreover, it would provide a study group with exciting material for an Advent series.

DONALD MACLEOD

*The Chapel of Princeton University*, by Richard Stillwell. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1971. Pp. 137. \$15.00.

This book is a rare combination of art, history, memorabilia, and liturgical matters. The author tells the story of the planning and building of one of Ralph Adams Cram's finest achievements—the magnificent chapel of Princeton University. His purpose in compiling and interpreting these facts is to assist everyone who enters and explores the Chapel "to become conscious of the immense amount of thought and skill that has been expended on the monument" (p. vi).

Completed in 1928, and at that time second in size only to the chapel of King's College, Cambridge, the Princeton Chapel is a repository of memorials, stained-glass windows, woodwork, sculpture, and furnishings of unique quality and lasting interest. From firsthand knowledge and with professional



accuracy, Robert Stillwell, Howard Crosby Butler Professor Emeritus of the History of Architecture at Princeton, has written an informative opening chapter on "The Present Chapel and Its Predecessors" (pp. 3-21); then follow the story of its windows, 85 pages of illustrations, plates and interpretative detail. "The theme of all the glass," the author writes, "in the main body of the Chapel is the life and teaching of Jesus Christ as recorded in the four gospels, together with the predictions and parallels of the Old Testament, and the subsequent influences of Christ's life and teaching in later times" (p. 24). The final section consists of a catalogue of Memorial Gifts with the names of the persons commemorated and of the donors.

Alumni of Princeton University and all others who claim the Chapel as their "church home" owe an incalculable debt to Professor Stillwell for a work of art, tastefully and competently done. This book will inform many of us and provide a means by which our appreciation will be deepened.

DONALD MACLEOD

*Something Beautiful for God*, by Malcolm Muggeridge. Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, N.Y., 1971. Pp. 156. \$5.95.

Ever since Malcolm Muggeridge got religion, his writing, speaking, and witnessing have touched the hues of a spectrum extending from the sophisticated humanism of *Punch* to the evangelical "Festival of Light" in Trafalgar Square. The burden of his witness, however, comes to focus mainly in his concern for Christian love in action. This explains his fascination with the work of Mother Teresa of Calcutta and her Missionaries of Charity whose life-style is shaped by a motto "Something Beautiful for God." Under this title, Muggeridge has compiled an aesthetically appropriate volume in which a substantial chapter describes the character and devotion of Mother Teresa and the work of the Sisters among the underprivileged and other derelicts in the streets of Calcutta. Another chapter consists of devotional maxims and reflections by Mother Teresa on the way of love; and still another records a dialogue between her and the author. In a final chap-

ter, entitled "A Door of Utterance," Muggeridge expresses his personal appreciation of the quality of Mother Teresa's witness and urges the expansion of the ministry of the Order.

In an age of mass-movements and mass-communication this book points to the strong simplicity of individual personal witness in action. It makes an ideal gift or presentation volume and for an open mind it brings a wealth of inspiration.

DONALD MACLEOD

*Sermon Analysis for Pulpit Power*, by H. C. Brown, Jr. Broadman Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1971. Pp. 63. 95¢.

In the Postscript of this slim paperback, the author writes, "Every preacher with whom I have talked seriously about preaching earnestly desires to increase the effectiveness of his preaching." In the course of eleven brief chapters, H. C. Brown, Jr., who is Professor of Preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, presents a remarkably cogent critical apparatus for the preacher. He is aware of the need for every preacher to agree to a self-examination, but he realizes at the same time how difficult it is after some years of preaching for any man to evaluate the effectiveness of his pulpit presentations. Some go instead to their friends, who will try to make them feel good; others go to their foes who are rarely fair. The best strategy is a sabbatical leave at a school of continuing education, but this is not always possible for everyone, especially those who need it most.

This little book purports to be a guide in "self-analysis"—not psychologically, but homiletically. It is intended, moreover, to be more helpful before the sermon is delivered than afterwards. For this reason, Professor Brown casts his analytical chart in the form of questions which any preacher should put to himself when the completed manuscript lies before him on his study desk. The chapters are grouped under three main headings: Analyzing the Foundations of Your Sermon; Analyzing the Construction of Your Sermon; Analyzing the Final Factors of Your Sermon. Each question raised here (there are ninety-five of them) will lead the preacher to focus upon a crucial element in the substance and

construction of the sermon, but particularly upon how these matters are handled in fulfilling the main purpose of preaching.

Ministers who are serious about the quality of their pulpit witness, teachers of preaching, and theological students will find in this paperback a very useful guide.

DONALD MACLEOD

*It's Tough Growing Up*, by C. W. Brister. Broadman Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1971. Pp. 128. \$2.95.

There are some name-preachers who cannot write or deliver a junior sermon and there were classic hymn-writers—Isaac Watts, for example—who could not compose a hymn suitable for youth. Professor Brister of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, is a scholar in his own right in his own field—Pastoral Ministry—and the author of a significant book, *Pastoral Care in the Church* (Harper & Row, 1964). Yet he demonstrates his multifaceted proficiency by producing an exciting little book on teenage problems and the contemporary youth culture. Written in a vivid conversational style, each of twelve chapters brings into focus a conflict or tension experienced by young people in today's world. These discourses were not composed in isolation; they are like running conversations in which Professor Brister himself is involved and from which he derives lively dividends. His chapter headings indicate his "now" orientation: "Growing Up in a Crisis Society," "Stranded in the Present," "On Becoming a Person," "Sex Is Here to Stay," "Defiance, Drugs, and Doomsday," etc. Every page lights up a facet of today's youth crisis and the author's common sense answers are high principles in the dress of the 1970's.

One would have wished Dr. Brister had brought more of his professional expertise into his diagnosis, but maybe that is another book. Ministers in search of a guide book for a season of Senior High discussion groups could do no better than choose this competent and engaging monograph on the art of growing up.

DONALD MACLEOD

*The Big Little School: Two Hundred Years of the Sunday School*, by Robert W. Lynn and Elliott Wright. Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, N.Y., 1971. Pp. xiii + 108. \$3.95.

This small volume is the first product of a study project on "The History of the World Sunday School Movement." The fact that it is co-authored by Prof. Robert W. Lynn indicates that it is born out of an enduring interest in the history of religious education and that it may be interpreted as part of the new trend in literature in the field of the history of education. Bailyn, Cremin, and others have sought to broaden the definition of the field of history of education to include cultural influences beyond the schools *per se*; Lynn has worked with them, his particular concern having been to bring the Sunday School into historical perspective as one of these influences.

In spite of its brevity, the book accomplishes the aim of telling and interpreting the essential story of the Sunday School. The usual beginnings and associations are reviewed. The unique value of the book begins to be evident as the authors deal with what they call "a margin of difference," the process by which the British model was altered in the United States to become a cross-social class agency for the dissemination of the peculiarly American "popular religion." The hypotheses (that the leaders were determined that the Sunday School not go down as a school for the poor, to which neither poor nor non-poor would go because of the stigma, and the rise of free public education defined the new role for the Sunday School by limitation) have seldom been so well expressed.

Social class distinctions were overcome, but not those of caste. Here and there throughout the book are indications of the need for further investigation of the subject of Sunday Schools among the Negro slaves, and the further role that the Sunday School has played in the black community. The hint is that it has been a very imperfect instrument for the purposes of the black church.

A chapter on the literature, lore, and song of the Sunday School reveals the existential strength of the popular religion that it served. Here are the roots of the Sunday School as a movement, and its power with individuals as

it handled ultimate questions of death and destiny.

The movement of the latter half of the 19th century is reviewed, with its leadership from the political and business communities, its effective network of associations and conventions throughout the United States and Canada, and its ingenious development of the Uniform Lessons.

The twentieth century is interpreted as one of confusion as many predicted the Sunday School's demise, others tried to inject elements of educational and theological sophistication, and the conflict of expert *vs.* volunteer, and professional *vs.* "old timer" came to a head. It seems to have persisted as a stronghold of evangelicalism and American popular religion in spite of all the efforts to replace and reform it.

The authors conclude that the Sunday School will continue, that it will maintain its evangelical character, that changes will take place particularly in response to the popular mind and mood, and that it will be resistant to other changes. Attempts at a more church-oriented religious education have been and will be undertaken, but with little promise of the influence and durability of the Sunday School itself.

The style in which the book is written is a bit discursive for a volume of history, and in some ways it is like a long, gossipy editorial. But this undoubtedly serves its basic purposes, which seem to be to entice the reader to further study of the movement and to awaken him to serious historical hypotheses that need to be investigated. As usual, but not as much as in some other volumes of theirs, Harper and Row's proofreader needs new glasses.

D. CAMPBELL WYCKOFF

*Bread and the Liturgy: The Symbolism of Early Christian and Byzantine Bread Stamps*, by George Galavaris. The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, Milwaukee, & London, 1970. Pp. 235. \$10.00.

To many, the study of bread stamps may seem extravagantly esoteric. (Indeed, all but

the true habitués of the Eastern Orthodox rite may suppose bread stamps to be some governmental scheme for combating hunger.) Nevertheless, these molds and forms which are used to impress symbolic designs on bread for ritual use have an interesting tale to tell.

The practice of stamping loaves of leavened bread before baking them began in pagan times and was taken over by the Eastern rites in the earliest centuries of Christianity. Although the design of the Eucharistic bread stamp now used in the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is relatively complex and uniform, earlier designs showed great variation and imagination.

Professor Galavaris begins by tracing the origin of bread stamps, and in the process he tells us a great deal about the making of bread in ancient cultures. He then makes separate studies of designs used for Eucharistic bread and designs intended for Eulogia bread—that which has come to be the *antidoron* (or the bread distributed to all at the end of the service as distinct from that given to communicants during the Liturgy) and other bread used for sacred but non-eucharistic purposes. Finally, the author relates bread stamps to the history and theology of the liturgy as well as to Christian symbolism found in church decoration and on sarcophagi.

Little information about bread stamps is found in the religious literature of the periods which produced them. Through careful research, George Galavaris has made the stamps themselves tell the story of their significance and evolution. The text is amply illustrated by nearly one hundred black-and-white plates. The reader is supplied with detailed footnotes and a comprehensive index.

The book will not, of course, appeal to a large market; but that is not the fault of the author. And times could change. A quarter of a century ago icons were arcane objects. Now reproductions of them can be purchased from a number of Protestant ecclesiastical supply houses. Who is to say that in another twenty-five years bread stamps will not hold a similar fascination?

LAURENCE H. STOOKEY



*Jesus Christ Superstar: A Rock Opera*, by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice. Decca Records, New York, N.Y., 1970. 2 LP's, 87 minutes. \$11.96.

The rock opera, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, is important for two reasons. In the first place, it is important culturally. The record album has sold widely; there have been many unauthorized performances; a gaudy operatic version is being presented in New York City; and it will be made into a movie. It is important to interpreters of Christianity simply because it is so popular.

In the second place, it is important religiously. Many in the younger generation rebel against organized, Western religion. Not a few young people receive their primary impression of Jesus from *Superstar*. I led discussions of the rock opera at a Synod Camp and found that some members of the younger generation judge the Gospels by *Superstar*.

The objections to *Jesus Christ Superstar* are many: "The music is too loud"; "Some of the melodies are danceable"; and "The rock music is impure; you can't produce a unified musical work, and be simultaneously influenced by Lerner and Lowe, Ferde Grofé, Tom Lehrer, the Motown sound, ragtime, and the folk idiom."

There are also theological objections: "The Gospels have been twisted around. For example, the words of Simon the Pharisee are put in the mouth of Judas, and Judas and Mary Magdalene have much more important roles in the rock opera than they do in the Gospels"; "The resurrection is left out, and, as Paul said, '... if Christ has not been raised from death, then we have nothing to preach. . . .'; "The humanity of Jesus is overemphasized; Mary Magdalene is portrayed as being in love with Jesus."

All of these objections have substance; yet they need qualification. A quiet, gentle rock opera would be a contradiction; rock is loved partly *because* it completely fills the aural environment. Several of the tunes are danceable; that means they have a strong beat, and without that beat they would not be popular. The music is eclectically influenced, but a strong case could be made for the idea that

the varied influences have been woven into an artistic whole.

The words of Simon the Pharisee are given to Judas, and his role, and that of Mary Magdalene, are expanded. But Webber and Rice were trying to write a dramatic opera, not to present an opera which solved "the Synoptic Problem." The resurrection is not *directly* presented; but *can* it be presented directly? The opera concludes with a movingly affirmative orchestral selection, and it could be argued that this is the least idolatrous way of affirming the resurrection.

*Jesus Christ Superstar* presents a human Jesus, with whom Mary Magdalene was in love. Mary sings:

I don't know how to love him  
What to do how to move him  
I've been changed yes really changed  
In these past few days when I've seen  
myself  
I seem like someone else

I don't know how to take this  
I don't see why he moves me  
He's a man he's just a man  
And I've had so many men before  
In very many ways  
He's just one more.

Mary is troubled by the possibility of her own conversion. She recognizes that there is something different about Jesus, and she looks for a category in which to put him. Mary is pictured as being romantically involved with Jesus, and the new Docetists, as well as the old, will doubtless object. But Webber and Rice have simply called to our attention one more implication of the real humanity of Jesus.

My first reaction to the idea of a rock opera about Jesus was highly negative. I have listened to it a number of times, and have become more and more impressed with it musically, even as I have become less favorably impressed with it theologically. But *Superstar* is more than a flash in the pan, and those who seriously intend to communicate with young people will familiarize themselves with it.

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# OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUMMER STUDY

June 12, 1972—

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- PR52 Great Preachers, Professor Horton M. Davies, Princeton University
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## *July 3-21*

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